

morbidly sublime



“What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime. It is the little shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset.”

- Crowfoot, Blackfoot Warrior and Orator



morbidly sublime:
reconstructing the rationality of death architecture

thank you

i have a list i keep in
the back of my mind
crushed ragged and torn
it floats through memory
holding the sacred names
that take too much to
speak
attached is the fear of
the next
one slipping away
one lost

gg
dad
vika
linda d
jeannie

undergraduate thesis:
college of architecture and planning
ball state university
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deidra j. oxendine

thesis professor:
andrew seager

thesis advisor:
arijit sen



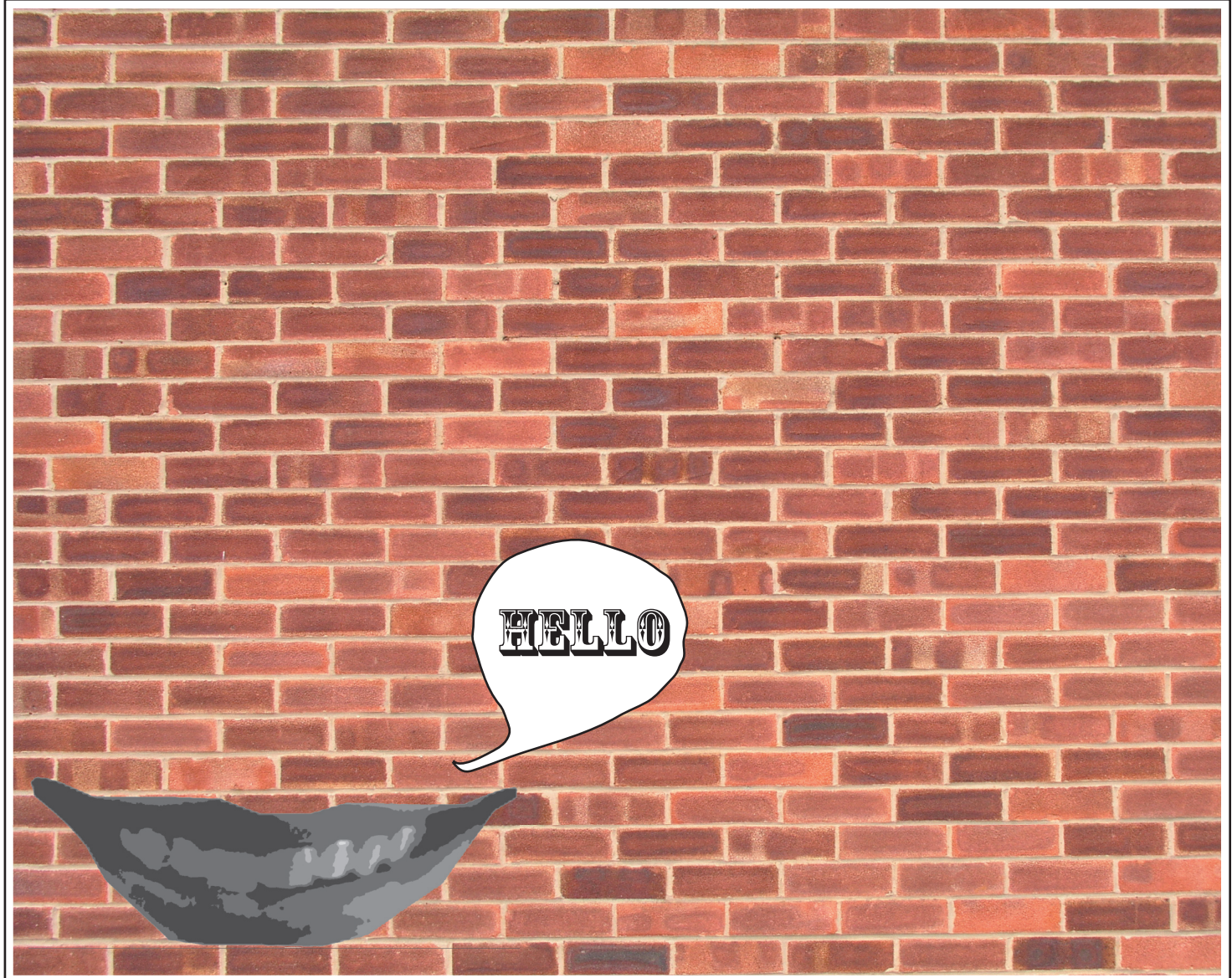
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Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to take this moment to introduce the wall. You may wonder why I'm introducing you to a wall. Truth be told, my thesis topic is death and our cultural and individual responses to it. However this evil wall won't let me see where to go.

And this is no wimpy wall, it's a freakin' huge wall with a core of steel, a skin of concrete under brick under stone, and wrapped in sharp metal sheets with spikes. This wall goes higher than I could ever hope to climb, runs longer than I could ever hope to walk and is stronger than I could ever hope to break. And it does not like me. It does not like me at all.

0. preface

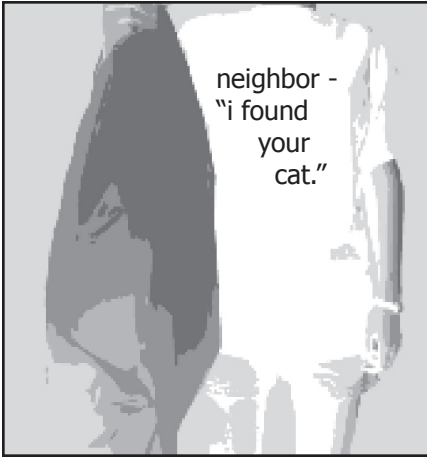


So I'm going to make it pretty and give it lovely flowers just to tick it off. Because that, my friends, is the secret: keep it angry and it'll never see the shovel in my back pocket and then I can finally begin to tell my story.

“Death is not the extinguishing of the light: it is putting out the lamp because dawn has come.”

- Rabindranth Tagore

1. death says hello



Every story has to have a beginning; this one starts twenty years ago with a wacky neighbor, a dead cat, and a Hefty trash bag. I was six, my neighbor was at our front door with the bag, and my cat was inside. In the space of a few seconds I went from a child, to a child with her first dead animal. Pursuant to regulations set forth by mothers the world over: mine yelled at our neighbor, snatched the cat-bag back, and began the process of helping me "move on." Even at the ripe old age of six, I remember feeling this process smelled funky. I didn't quite understand the point of the "moving on." Honestly I didn't really understand the "death" part. After all, my understanding of the "great transcendence" was limited by my attention span. I don't mean to say that I wouldn't miss Fluffy; I just couldn't grasp the permanence of death. To me "moving on" was irrelevant. Fluffy went to Heaven, and everybody knew Heaven was the place to be. Where are the Legos?

I do think, however, that Fluffy began to define for me the relationship I was, and everyone was, expected to have with Death. Instead of allowing ourselves blindly innocent beliefs, we adults have replaced faith with the fear of our realized mortality. A mortality we have become less and less able to accept. The problem inherent with this disconnection is the loss of honesty in our everyday.



me -
"have you seen my legos?"

Death –
n.

Definition: end of life

Antonyms: being, birth, entity, existence, life

Of course, just saying something is wrong doesn't work. It's the whole "put up or shut up" phase of the project. I've decided I don't like the way we blandly ignore death, okay, why? Well, to start with if we take even the briefest look at our country's history, we see the greatest changes were accomplished by people who didn't know how to shut up and ignore the truth. Our country was shaped by rioters and rebels and loudmouths. Its shining moments aren't hushed conversation over tea; they were gory, angry moments that resonate through today due to their violent attacks on accepted conventions. And yet, we have become more and more obsessed with watching what we say, how we say it, where we say it, and to whom it is said. How have we gotten to this point? Where in our past did we begin to replace our inner rebel with the over-analytical, over-sterilized push-overs we are now?

I blame antiseptic. And the Enlightenment.

Seriously though, think about our lives before we learned to kill the flu or properly clean a wound. The simplest of scratches could spell death, and often did. The historical understanding of death was commonplace because living past the ripe old age of five was a miracle. Just look at the writing of the time; it's soaked with death. It had to be. But over the years we have developed more and more ways to extend life and now we are even finding ways to become gods and grapple with the repercussions of time and conception itself. Science isn't evil, but there comes a point when we need to realize that some things shouldn't be tampered with. Don't believe me, just check out the horror movies on late-night television. They're always about the stupid scientist who pushes too far and creates giant mutant frogs who end up killing us all anyway. And all because Joseph Lister learned to wash his hands. Sheesh.



And then there's the Enlightenment. As a movement it was great and the repercussions are generally good. The whole rise of political liberalism and humanitarian concerns were definitely a plus. I'm afraid, however, that we have taken the idea of moral correctness too far. Being good to one another never meant killing ourselves to be "polite." And that is what we typically do when someone dies. We put aside our natural inclinations and try and mourn accordingly. We try not to break down because we don't want others to be uncomfortable. Why must we stamp down our instinctual response to ripping losses to keep the status quo. I'm not saying use your pain to kill your annoyingly peppy neighbor, but we must allow ourselves to feel the honesty of our emotions.

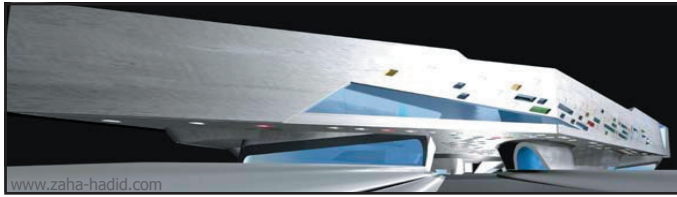
This means the we in the U.S. must re-evaluate our relationship with the concept of death and welcome it back to the table. To begin, consideration must be given to the fact that we react to death on different levels; the physiological, the neurological, and the psychological. Within these three, there are other strong factors that play a key role in our individual responses. These include; time, regulation, identity, memory, community and sensation. The way these interact can begin to reveal how architecture should respond not only to Death but to our own individual relations with death. Our concrete world is kept in tidy containers where we have even tried to regulate nature's to a specific time and place. When we can allow ourselves to understand and appreciate the complete cycle of life, a new death architecture can be formed from this newfound balance.

There is frequently more to be learned from the unexpected questions of a child than the discourses of men, who talk in a road, according to the notions they have borrowed and the prejudices of their education.

- John Locke

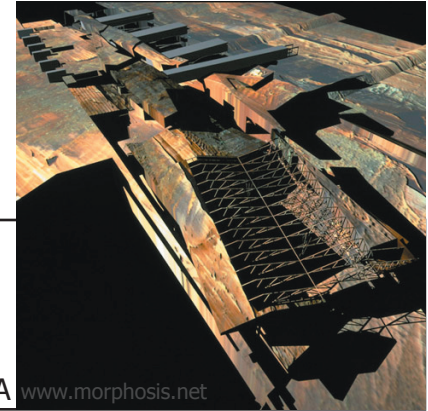


I needed to find projects to study that felt emotionally charged and that weren't afraid to get a little dirt under their nails. I chose the following six for reasons I outlined below, but most importantly because they each have very strong experiential bones at their core. Each develops a journey through its own space and time that both sets it apart and connects it to its users.



free-form expressive true
response

Zaha Hadid, Science Center, Wolfsburg, Germany



bruta1 decayed buried skeletal

Morphosis, Diamond Ranch High School, Pomona, CA, USA



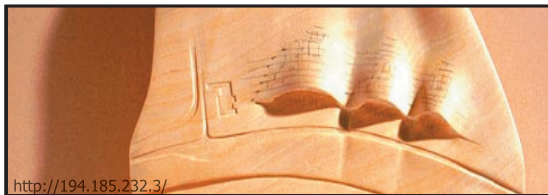
layered stacked torqued

Behnisch Architekten, Norddeutsche
Landesbank, Hanover, Germany



simple honest leading mysterious

Carlo Scarpa, Brion-Vega Cemetery, San Vito d'Altivole, Italy



burrowed free undulating

Renzo Piano, Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern, Switzerland



emergent mysterious experiential
10 green serpentine

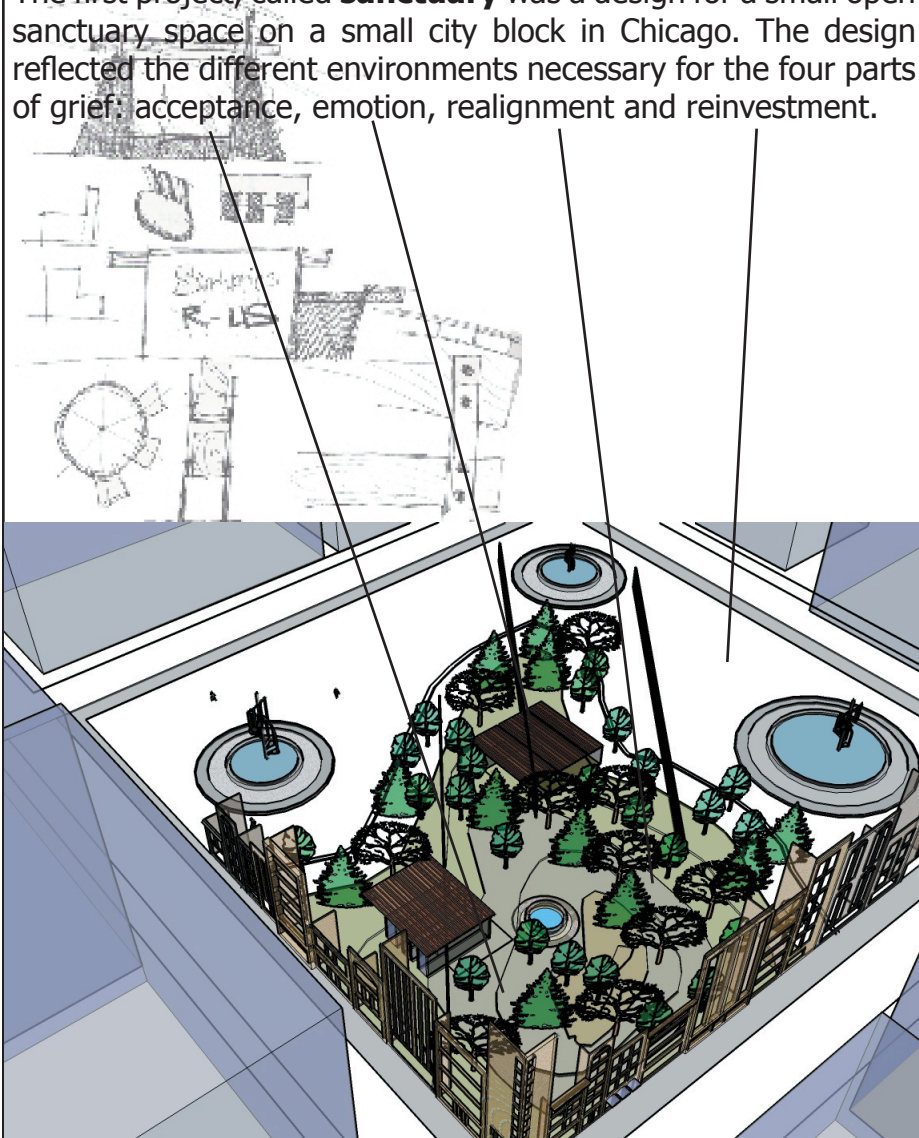
heneghan.peng.architects, Headquarters for the Department of Arts, Dublin, Ireland

3. everything that came before...sort of

4. working with mr. reaper

I took my first timid steps into “death” architecture in the fall with two small projects. Both were geared toward understanding the architectural moves made to create a place for sanctuary and a place for remembering, or a place to remember the dead and to confront the living.

The first project, called **sanctuary** was a design for a small open sanctuary space on a small city block in Chicago. The design reflected the different environments necessary for the four parts of grief: acceptance, emotion, realignment and reinvestment.



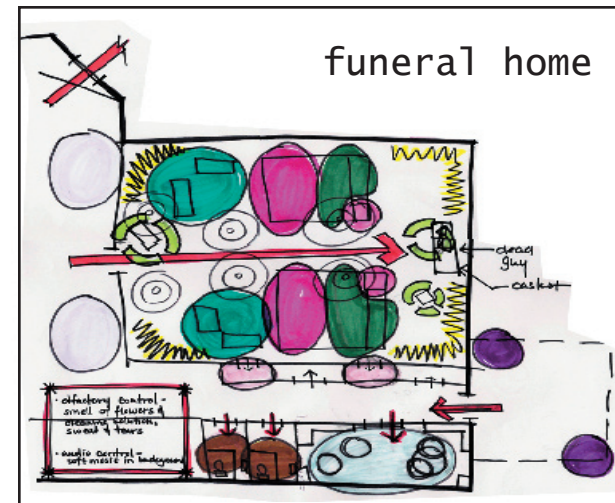
1,350,000 was devoted to creating a space that forced people to face a “living” problem, the large number of homeless children in the US. Basically, I was dealing with the creation of not a monument, but a confrontation piece.



The final design consists of 1,350,000 steel rods dispersed across a rolling field. The form of the land allows the visitor to be lost and found at different points on the path. The path is defined by the user instead of the designer, so the users decide how immersed they will become in the piece, a reflection of how involved they will become with the problem at hand.

Checking out existing types turned out to be one of the most helpful steps I took. Just taking a brief glimpse at the funeral home, mall, and gothic church revealed amazingly complex and saturated means of forcing / hindering human interaction.

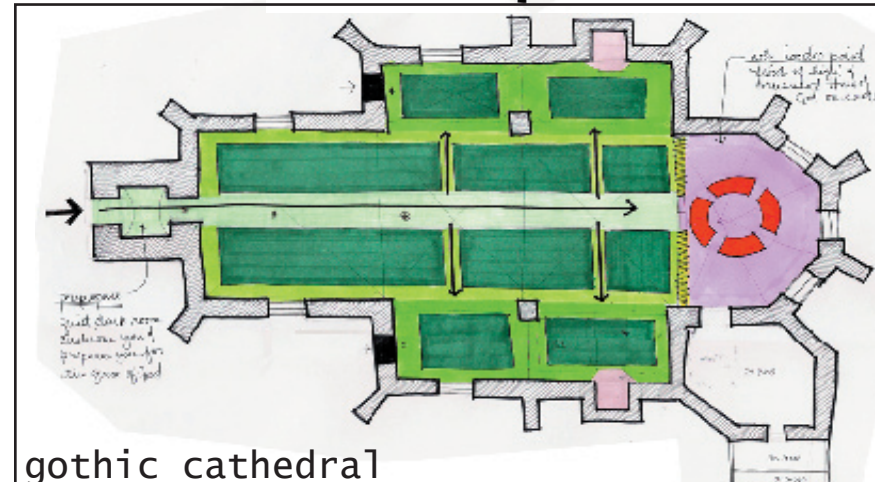
If you're going to study death architecture, I think one of the best places to look is a typical funeral home. I was amazed at the steps taken to group people. I was able to identify nine different spaces geared to place the mourners squarely into specific roles. Just consider the seating. The plush corner seat is reserved for the person the group as a whole defines as the one grieving the most. Then there is the family section, the friend section behind that, and finally a peppering of seating toward the rear of the showing room for those who are just there because they kinda-sorta knew the person. A kitchenette is usually available to store the children while the adults deal with the adult things.



Almost all of us has had to suffer through the mall shopping adventure. However, if you want to see the way people interact with one another, the mall is one of the best places to sit and watch for awhile. An entertaining places to watch is the blind corner, because for some reason most of us tend to hug corners. When you stuff a million people into one path, the corners become automatic interaction (collision) points. It's revealing to see how young and old, singles and couples, react to walking into another person. Who apologizes, who laughs, who curses? Oh, check out the food courts too. Nothing like adding juggling food into the delicate dance we perform around strangers.



Spatially, the cathedral is one of the simplest structures. It has a strong central core of movement and side aisles for aisles for sitting and talking to God or just appreciating the sheer power of the architecture. The most important space, however, is the altar, or hoodoo holy place as I labeled it to the right. The altar is seen as the connection between us and Him. By using soaring verticality and flooding the space with "divine" light Gothic builders created a surreal sense of otherness that allowed parishioners to feel as though their messages were going directly to the ears of God.



6. identifying archetypes

The research I completed during fall semester helped me to identify four common archetypes we recognize in relation to “grief.” I think it’s important to understand how we begin to break our reactions to death into generalized parts to find the bits that need to be reconnected, the parts that need to be mixed together to get that messily honest reaction.

Perhaps the most surreal reaction is the one where you are forced to **confront** the reality of death, a moment rife with numb shock and the disconnected feeling of living a life that isn’t your own, then, having to allow the truth to sink in, the truth that someone you love is no longer with you.

Next we face the most wrenching time when all we can do is **feel**. Here, we are past pleasantries and can only hold on for the ride. Unfortunately, our culture has taught us that these emotions are for private times. We have been tamed into submissive politeness for the sake of the other person.

To **realign** is to begin to shift the lives we lead to no longer include the person we lost. We pack away their things, perhaps put away or take out their pictures. This is the time we begin to move on.

Lastly, there is the time to **remember**. This is the most communal part of our grieving. We are now able to “keep it together” long enough to face people. We are now also to find ways to create objects to those we who passed.



7. boarding the story

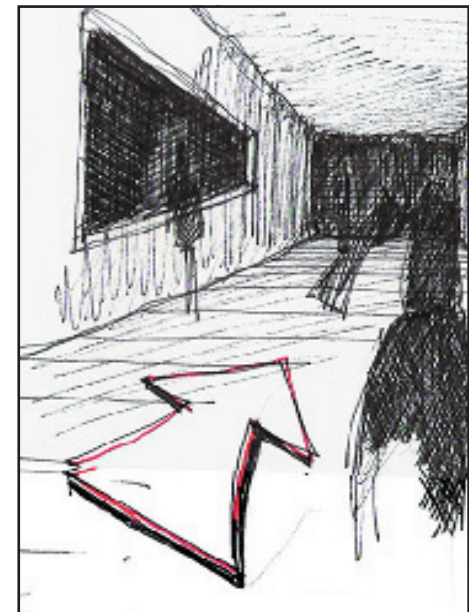
With the four archetypes in mind I began to sketch out how I felt the overall project would shape itself. As I progressed I realized that the project shouldn't be about a building on a plot of land. The project should, instead, be about the journey we undertake to live and to die. Again bringing in the idea of death not as good/bad, but as a reality, a fact. The problem then becomes: how does an experience get shaped by the surrounding architecture? If architecture is our voice, our reflection, then it must be true to our honest responses and be stripped of rationality that calls to our conditioned responses. Storyboarding the broad strokes I wanted to make helped me to connect the concept of "morbidly sublime" to concrete architecture.

open, light, surrounded
by a collection of thought,
images, and noises, jarring,
everyday life, trying to find
what's important

moments of clarity,
one idea, one solid
meaning, blank

age, destruction, rot, the
loss of perfection, reality of
the flaw, intrusion of natural
unavoidable presence

moving into darkness
and unknown, the idea
of dark as mystery,
uneasy, uncertain

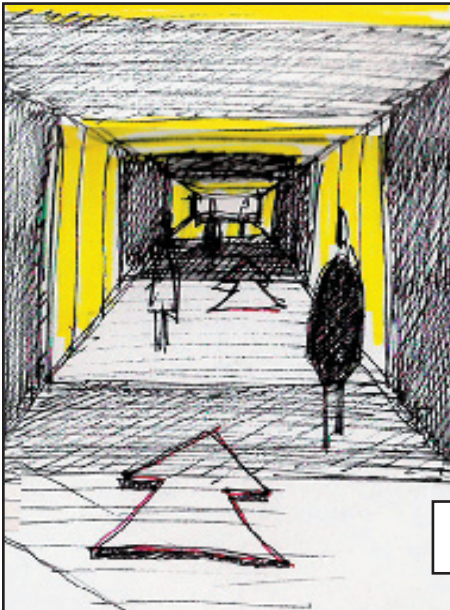


coming out of the dark,
light v. dark, moments
where you can look out
of the construct you're
in, communal

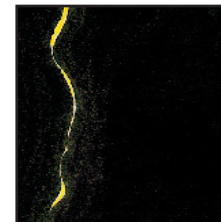
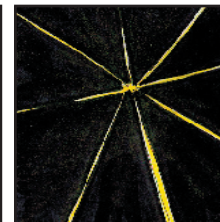
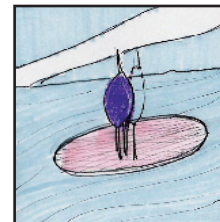
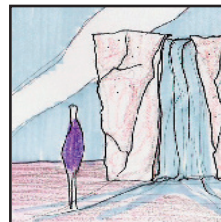
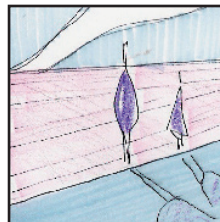
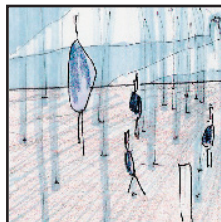
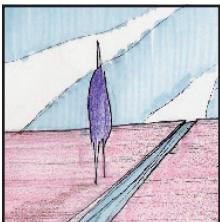
light cutting through
dark, solitary journey,
empty

calm, open, natural,
lush, eden, freedom,
escape, release

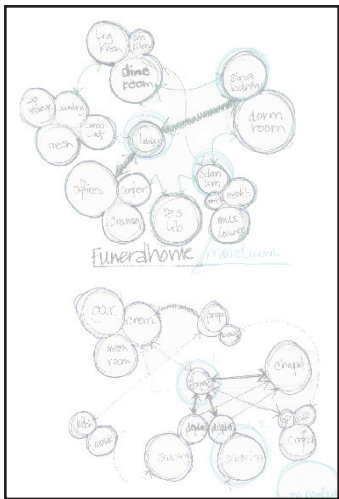
transitional, between
two worlds, still not a
true part of either, alone
in the group



OR

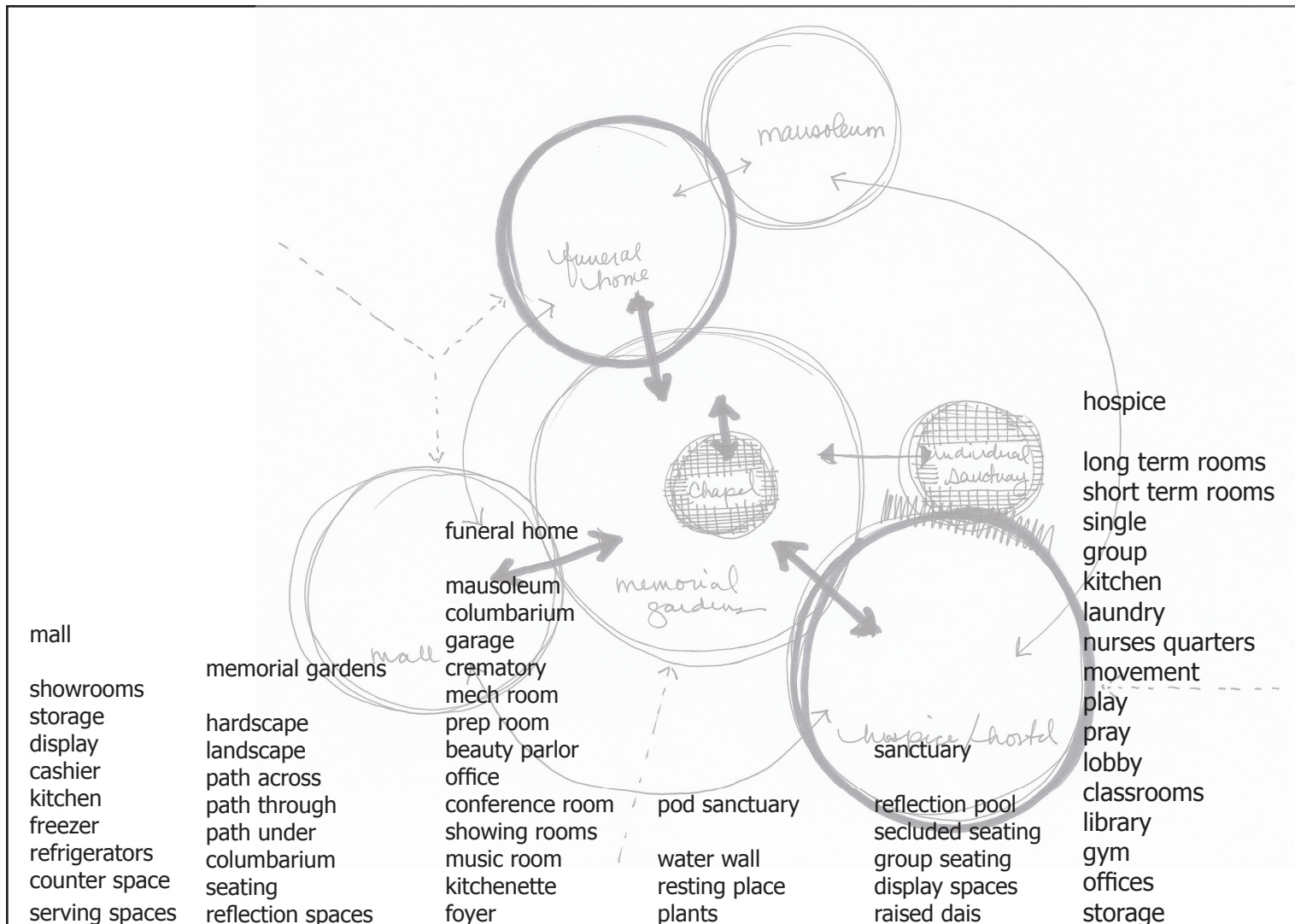


Along with the spatial aspects of architecture, the idea of water and light as symbols of life and death came up continually. Water can be seen as a barrier, a plaything, a mirror, a separator, or an accentuator. Light has been seen as the harbinger of the divine for centuries, making dark the place where bad things tend to dwell.



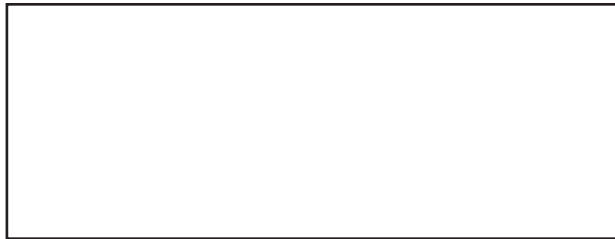
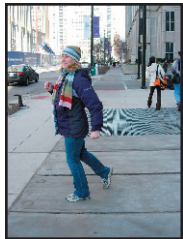
The program's main function is to talk about the connections I want to create within my project. Firstly there is the need to intermingle levels of the death process: those who are grieving and those who are dying. Beyond that, I want to push the inhabitants of the hospice into our day-to-day lives. I don't want separation between any of us. I think we need to push against one another at the uncomfortable times in our lives to, again, truly appreciate what it means to be alive.

8. programming death





Ok, so the project shouldn't be about the plot of land it's on, but it still needs a home. Contextually I wanted the project placed in a highly urban site, automatically allowing it an intermingling of people. When a community is more diversified it has a tendency to be more open to changes. Also, engaging dissimilar systems of belief will really challenge the designer to accomplish a symbolism that interacts with each individual in relation to death. This design shouldn't aim at an extremely specific group of people. Concepts, rituals, and reactions to death are too numerous to pigeon-hole either them or the people who practice them.



The site I chose for the project sits on the Northwestern University Campus in Downtown Chicago, Illinois. It is bounded by Huron to the south, Superior to the north and Fairbanks Ct to the west. All four sides contain a mixture of medical, commercial and educational buildings. Bus lines run along the western edge connecting the site to the rest of the city. It also sits within a twenty minute walk of Navy Pier and other tourist attractions.

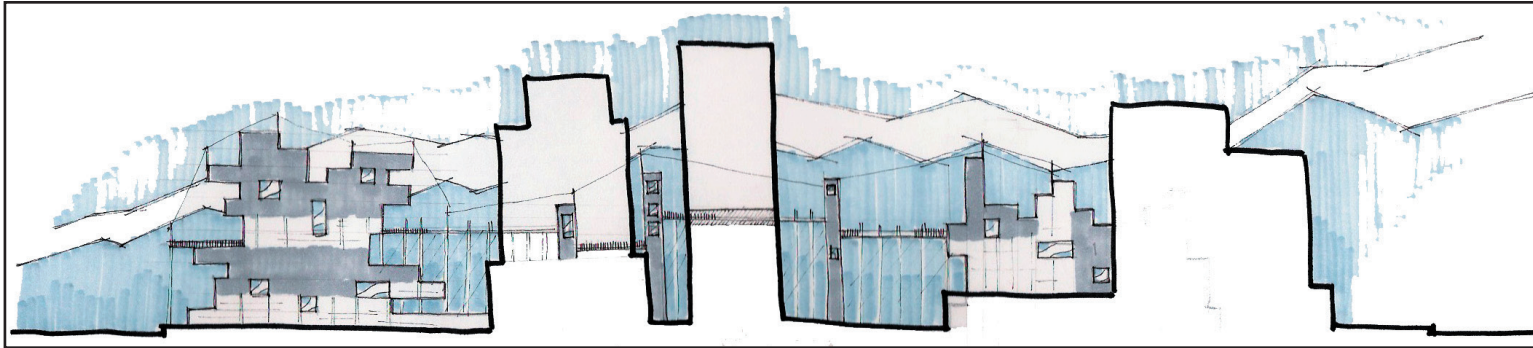
The architecture surrounding the site is a mix of contemporary medical and 50s era University buildings. The new Laurie Medical Research Building was finished on site not long ago, a fact I am choosing to ignore.

covered walkways
connecting to
northwestern university
hospitals

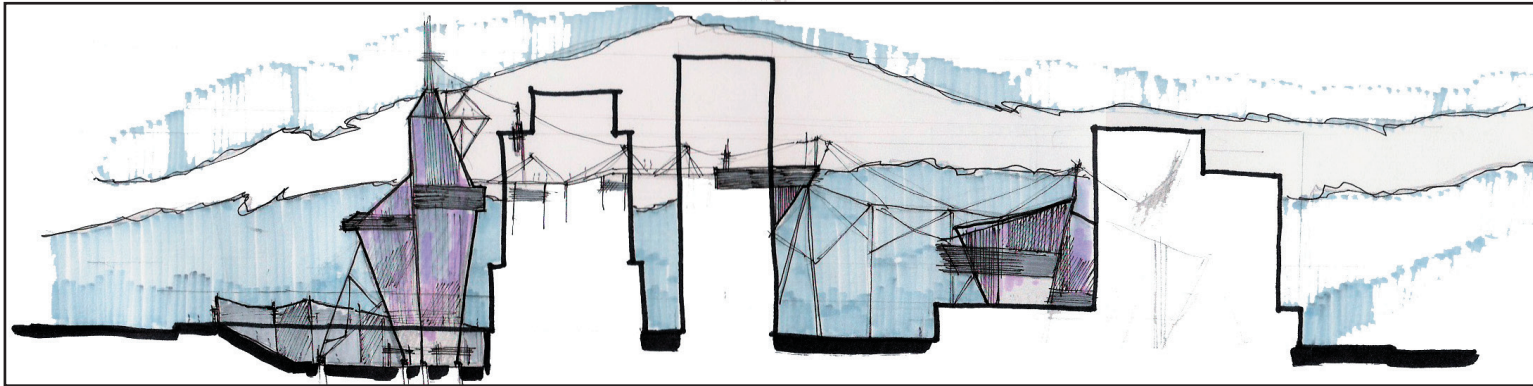
jesse brown VA
medical center

prentice women's
hospital





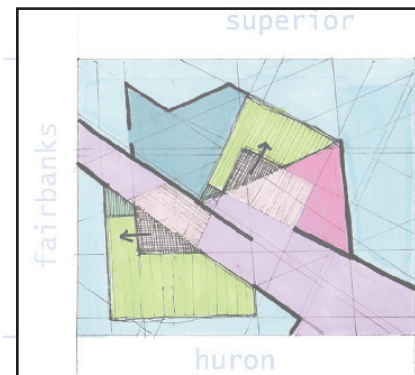
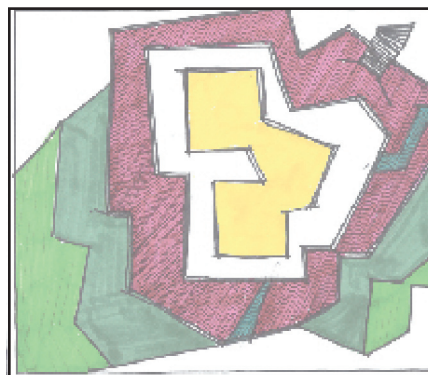
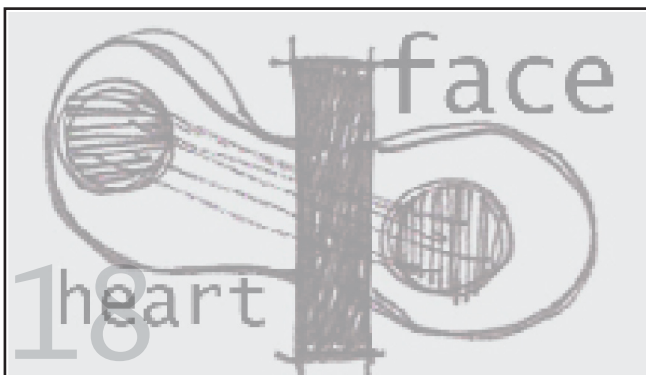
Concept 1:
the grid
realigned,
blocky, yet
still following
known path

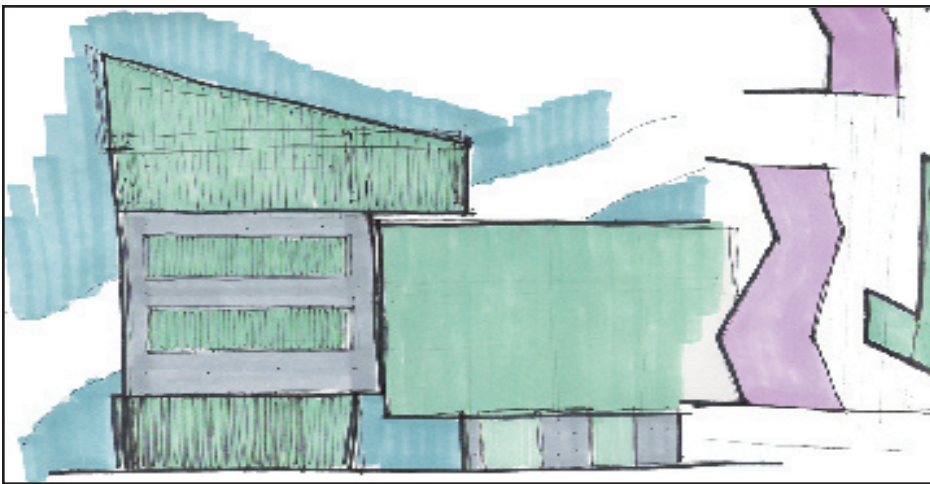


Concept 2:
"waterworld",
bare, bones
tendons,
flesh peeled
open

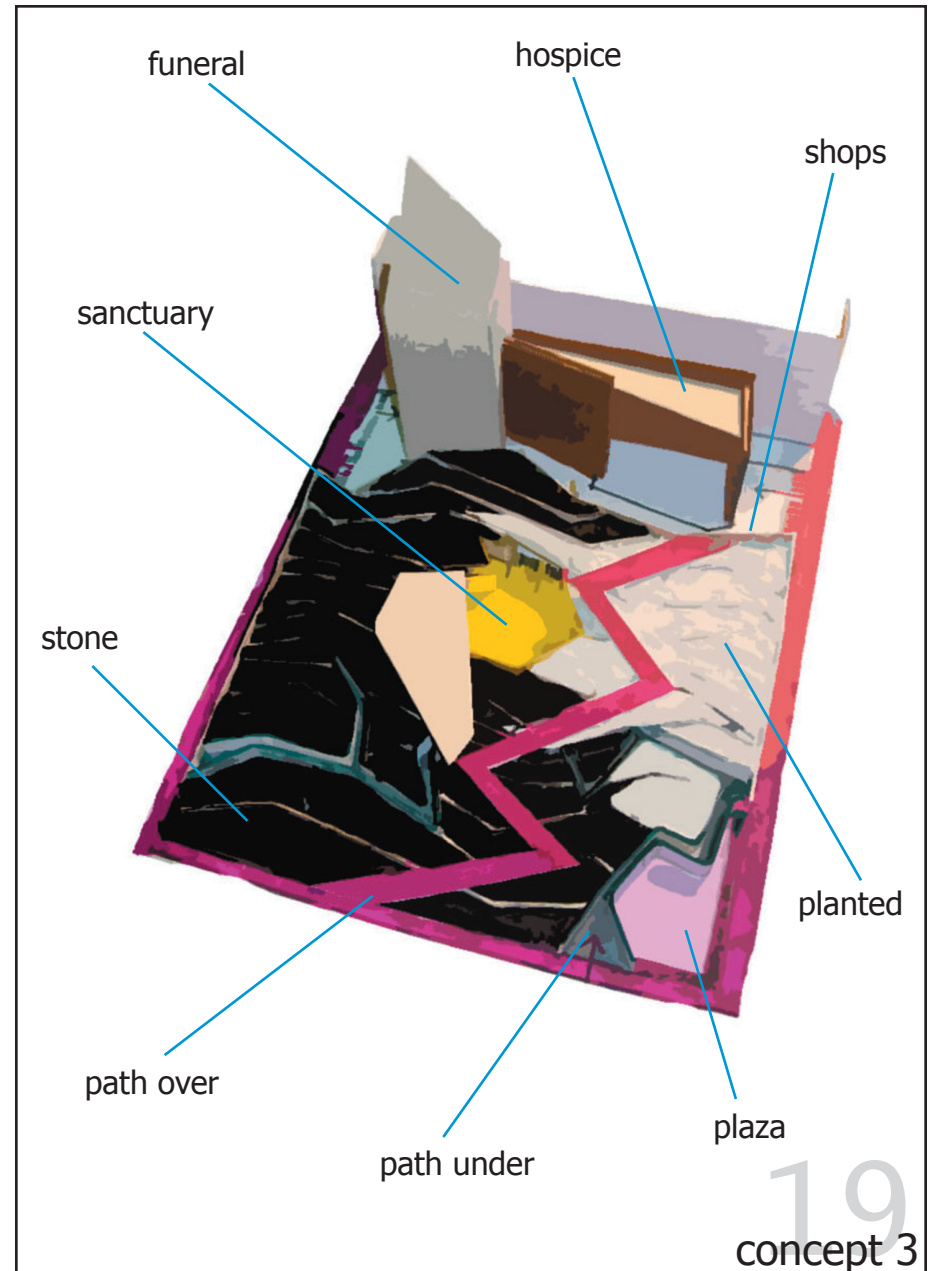
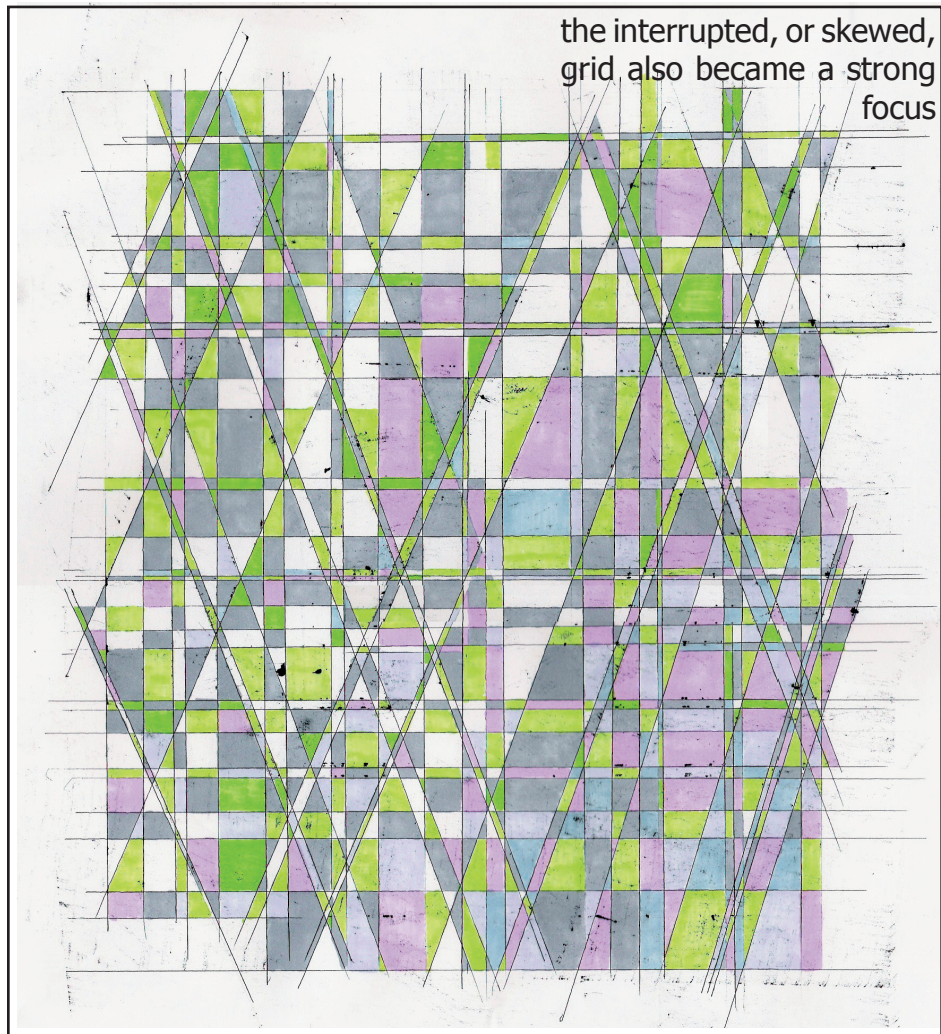


My first attempts at concept solidified the need for this project to incorporate the "journey." I began by placing some kind of wall or divider between the city and the hospice/funeral home uses, but then realized I was doing what I complained about. I was automatically separating out the users by creating a face and a heart, or front and back.





Concept 3 creates an elaborate memorial garden on the site. Two strong pathways cut across the landscape defining two very different experiences. The first moves across the surface of the gardens and the second actually cuts into the ground and terminates in a large chapel in the center of the site. In the end, the buildings become subordinate to the moves of the gardens, the built bows to the natural.



11. the design as it stands

interaction

interaction can be defined not just as the physical reaction to the site, but also as the mental and emotional connections we make within a place

scale

the horizontal, vertical, and volumetric allowances a space is given automatically call to archetypes each of us hold within our minds.

light

light is one of the oldest and most powerful tools a designer can use. light defines for us the concepts of open v closed, safe v dangerous, good v bad

texture

the reaction of a surface to light and sound, our response to sight and feel are key to our experience. the layering of surfaces adds to the core design

color

red is dangerous or sensuous, blue is open and calming. the guttural responses we have to color allow us to create meanings that can void assumptions

sound

the noise of our lives cement moments in our minds and can be used to help us easily recall emotions. sounds can also help us block out the extraneous clicks and clacks of our lives.

The final design focused on three paths through the site. The first moves through the pedestrian "cavern" on the east edge. The second wanders over the memorial gardens, ending in a small pod sanctuary tucked behind the hospice. And the third cuts under the gardens and culminates in a large central gathering space.

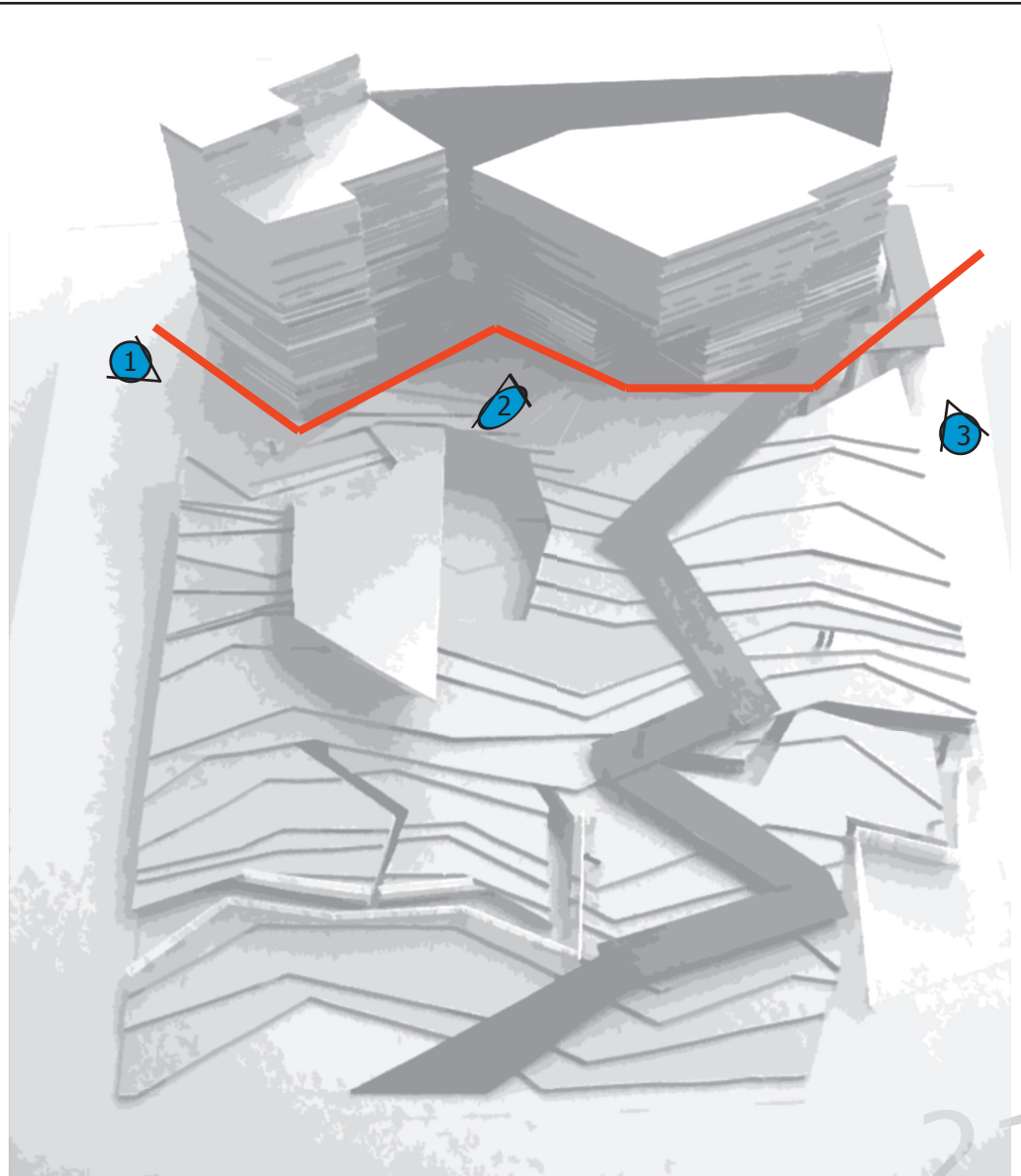


path 1 – through

im standing on a pin
balanced warily on
the top of a mountain
drawn by a child
all pitched sides
falling down to nothingness

im standing on my pin
balanced in my center
but my arms bring me down
waving anarchically
at passing clouds
unaware of the
danger at the bottom
of this childish mountain
taller than the skies
and sharper than
any voice ive known

the pin teeters on
its razor sharp point
cutting into the granite
that is serving it
and im just barely
holding on with my toes
and my stupid arms
just won't stop
swinging at passing clouds

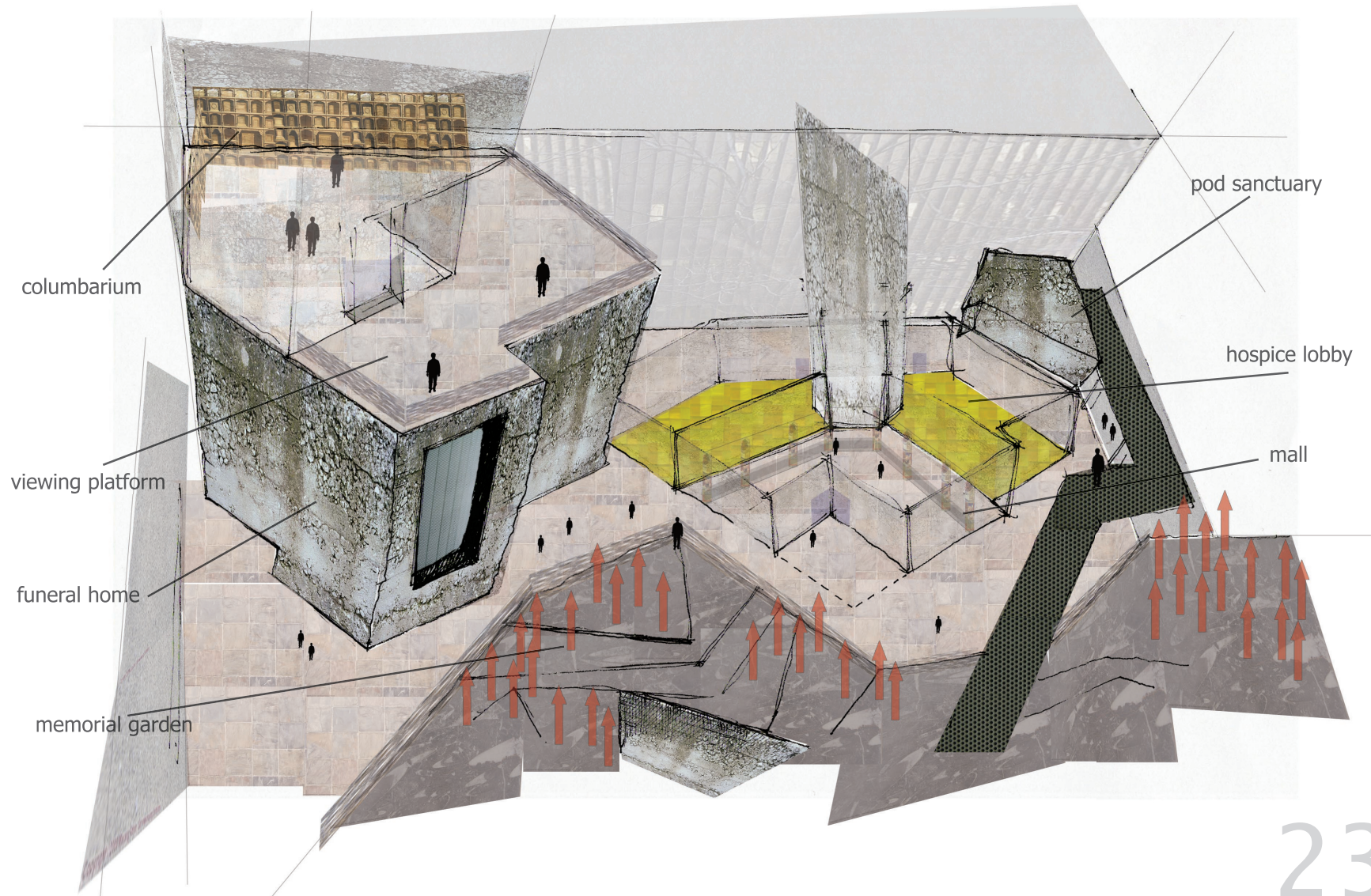


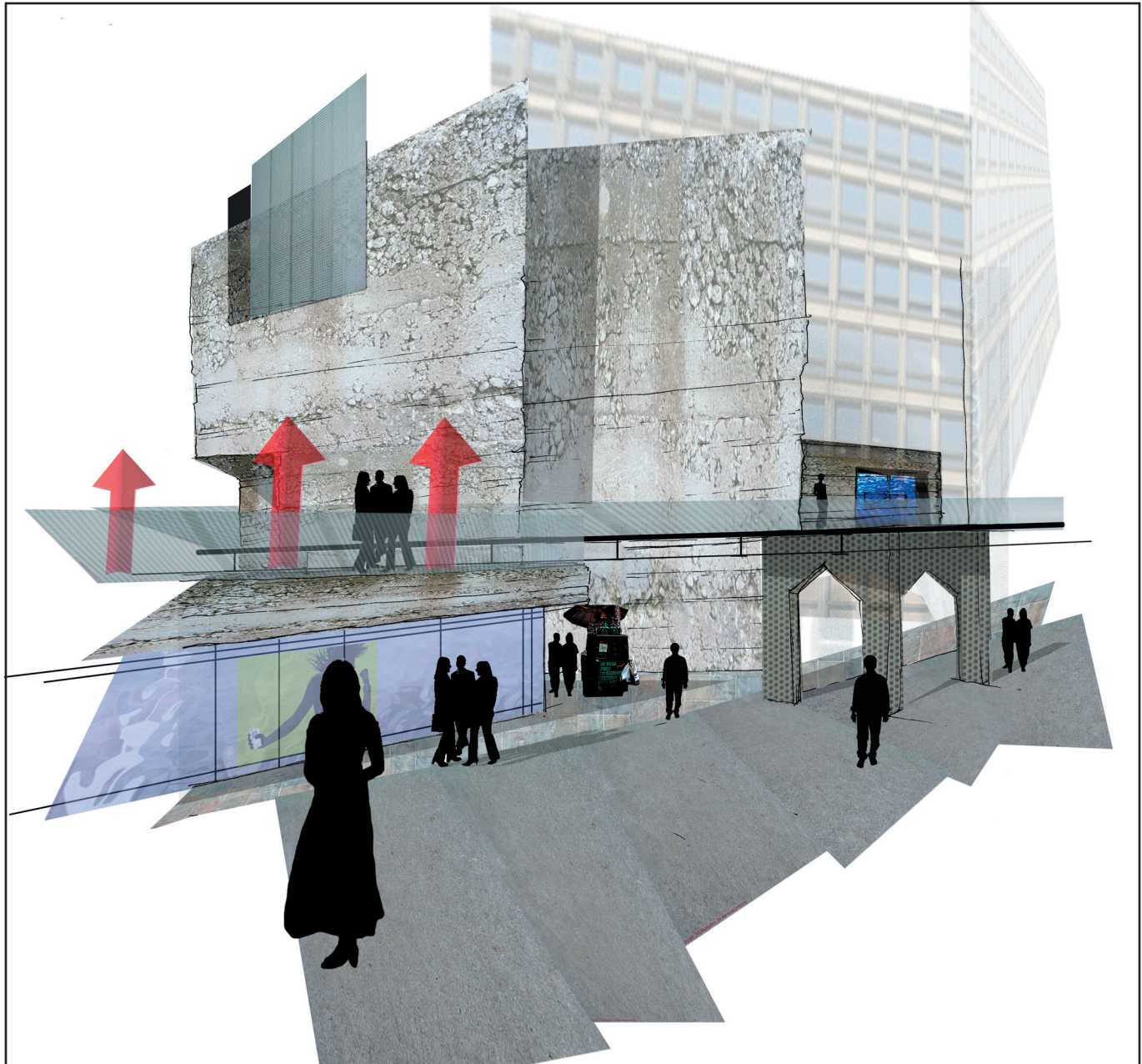
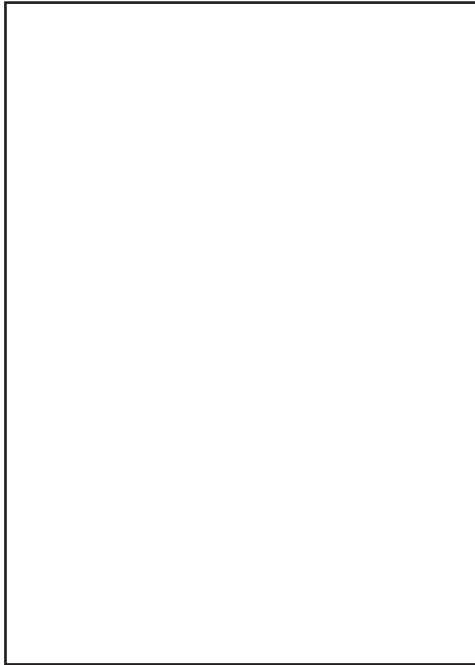


1 - At the north side of to the urban cavern, the ground floor of the funeral home step back to welcome visitors into the shopping plaza. In the background you can see the stores settled under memorial garden.



2 - The upper level of the funeral home and the lower level of the hospice are shown in the image below. The Columbarium is carved into the top floor of the funeral home. A large viewing platform affords a sweeping view over the entire complex. The ground floor of the hospice functions as an extension of the mall and becomes a lobby space for inhabitants to the rear. You can also see the pod sanctuary perched behind the hospice.





3 - The southern entrance to the urban cavern is covered by the black path as it shoots out from the gardens. As the walkway makes its way along above the sidewalk, rough metal archways spring up to give it support. Advertisements and people dot the sidewalk, beckoning shoppers into the mall to mix with inhabitants and mourners as they, too, make their way through the site.

path 2 - over

it's the old man in his garden
speaks the loudest
his grin, his grumbling
brush slightly
at the path we amble

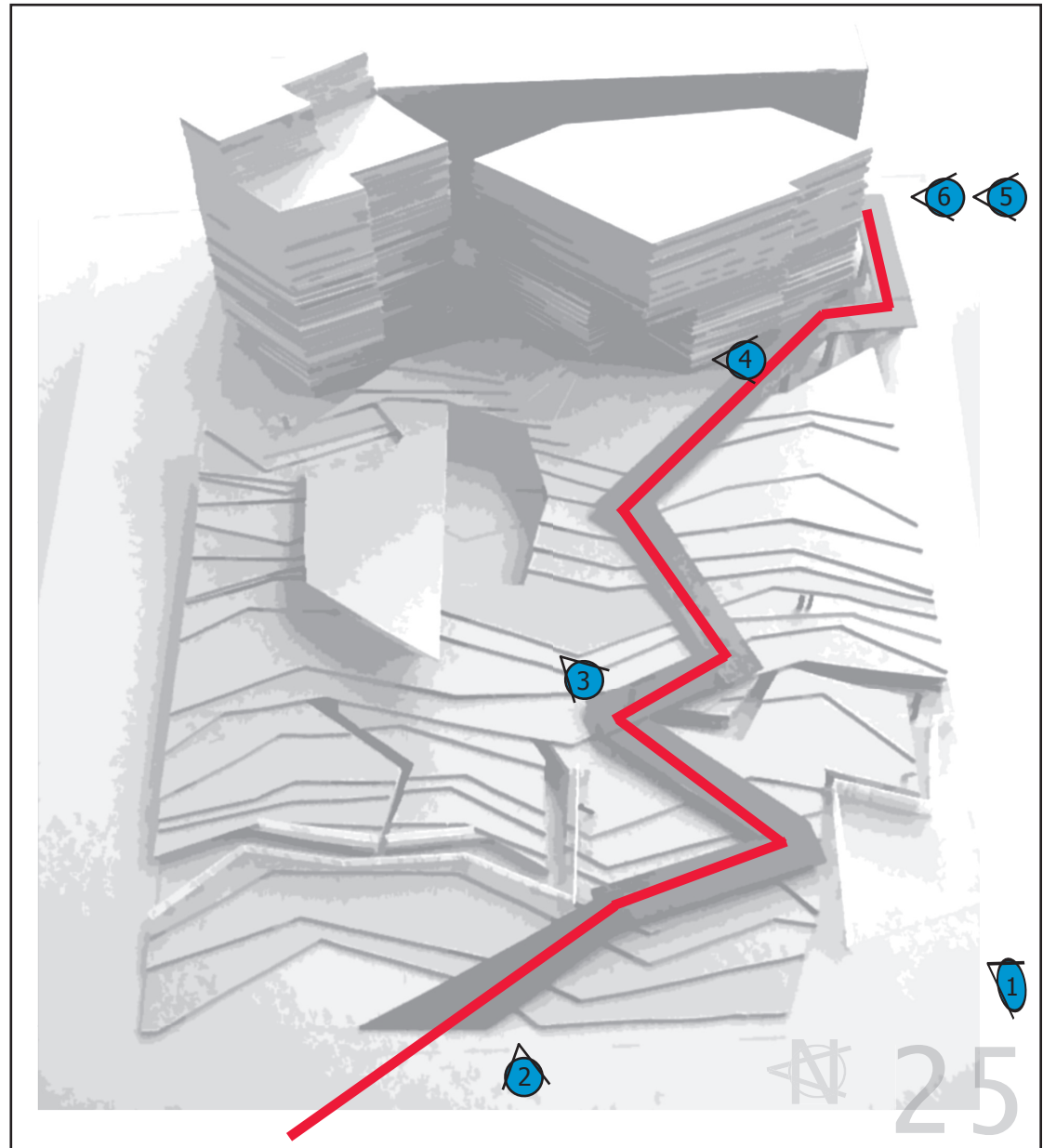
it's an unrelenting presence
a constant stance
in the patchwork
of our everyday

it's hands working dirt
fingers wooing flowers
out of ground
a persistent daydream
of jungles green and
brightly colored monuments

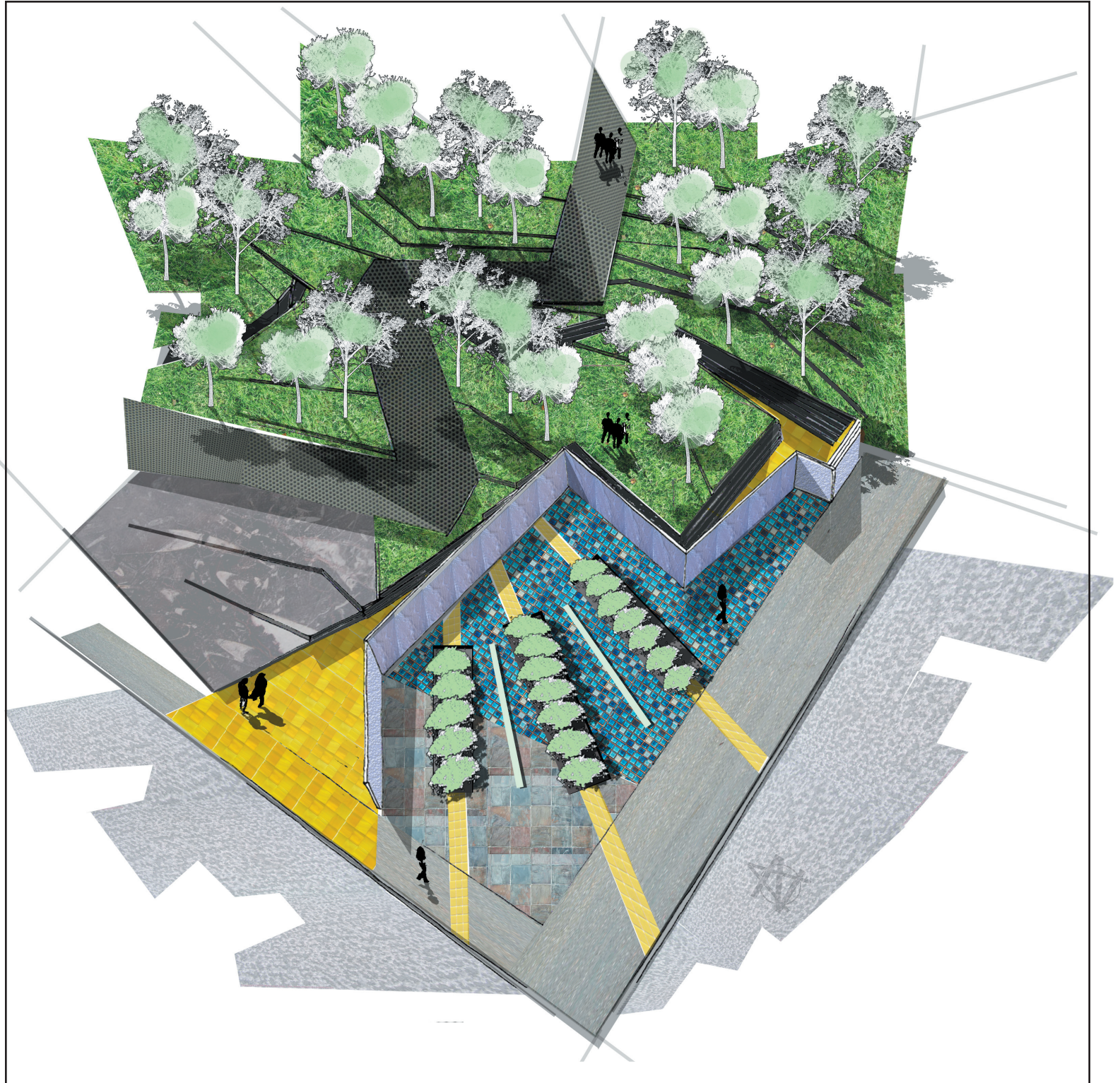
it's the moment realized
the staple is gone
notice the acquiescence
of this miniscule piece
of our everyday

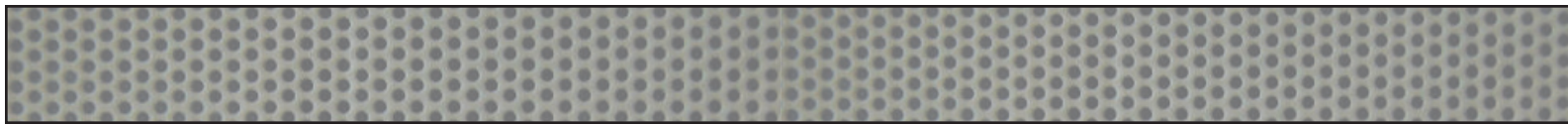
it's the reality of
monotonous moments
carbon copied
across unfiltered eyes
ending abruptly
without acceptable explanation
without good-byes

it's the small coincidences
the token players
in our lives define
our true relationship
our true coherence
with the unalterable
with the intractable
of our everyday

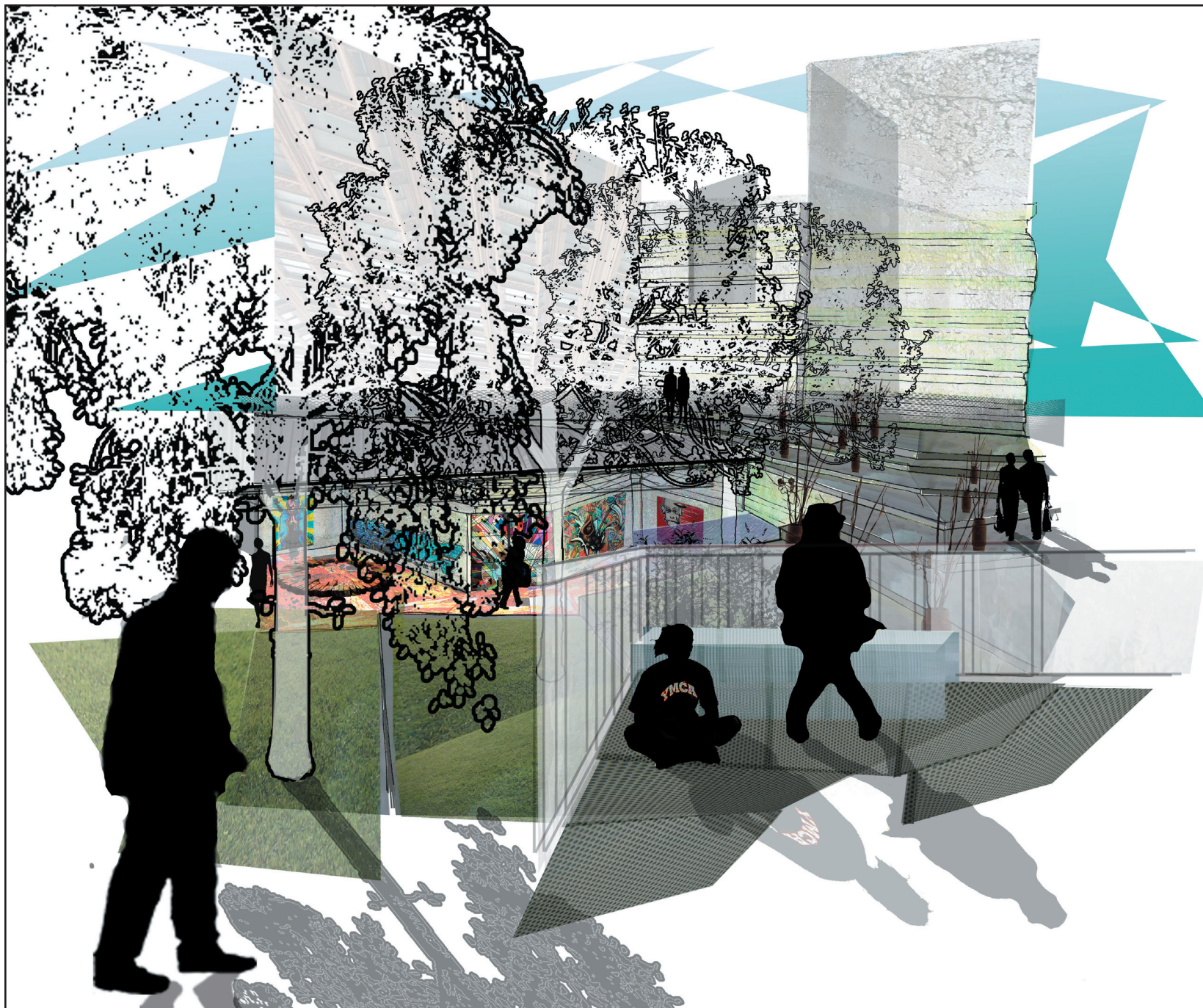


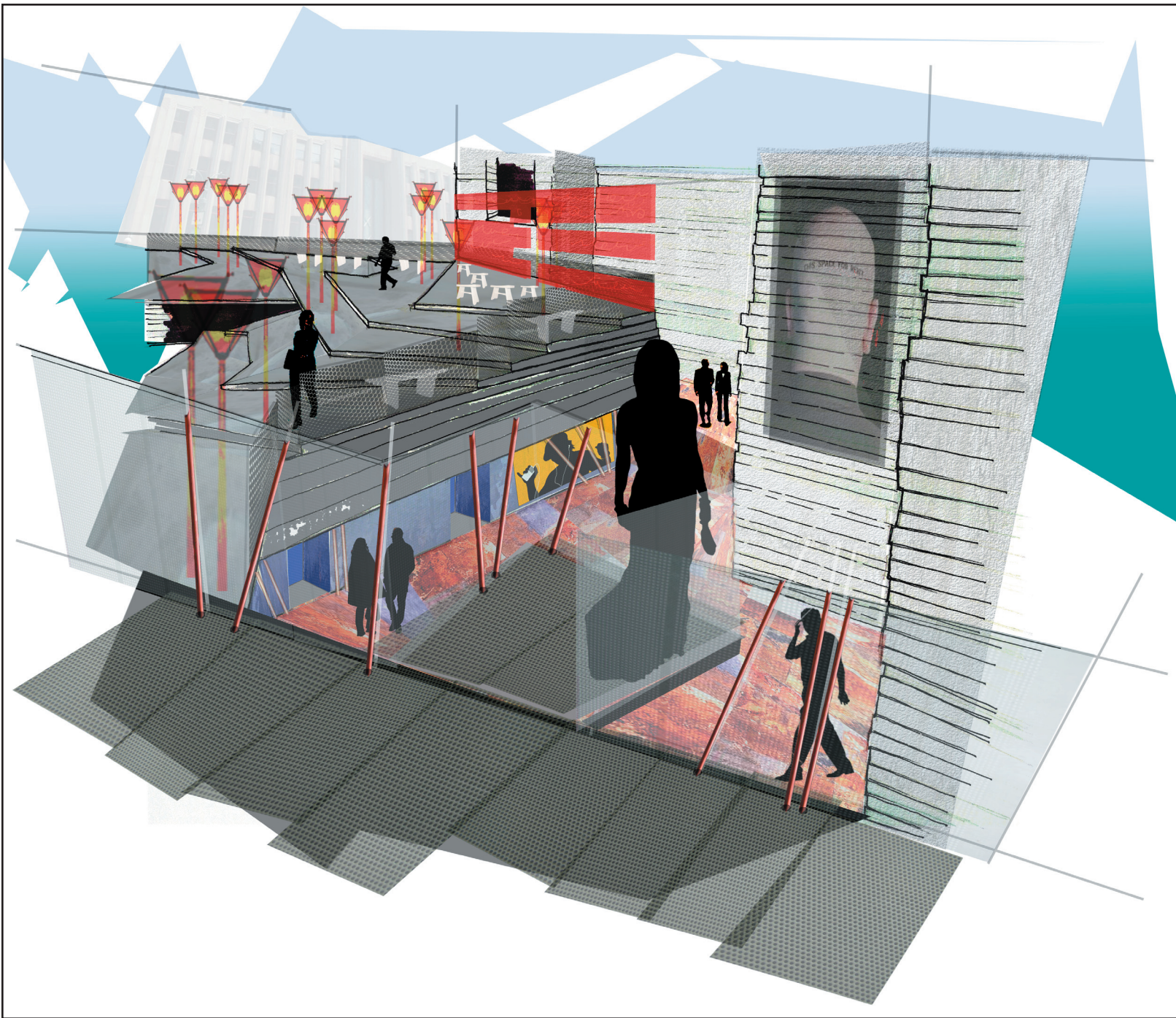
1 - Afternoons are very busy times for the streets all around the site as they fill with employees, students, visitors and vendors. For this reason the southwest corner has been pulled back to make a welcoming resting point for you to eat lunch, talk, or simply listen to water cascading down the glass wall along the path. You can see the black metal walk cutting across through the gardens.





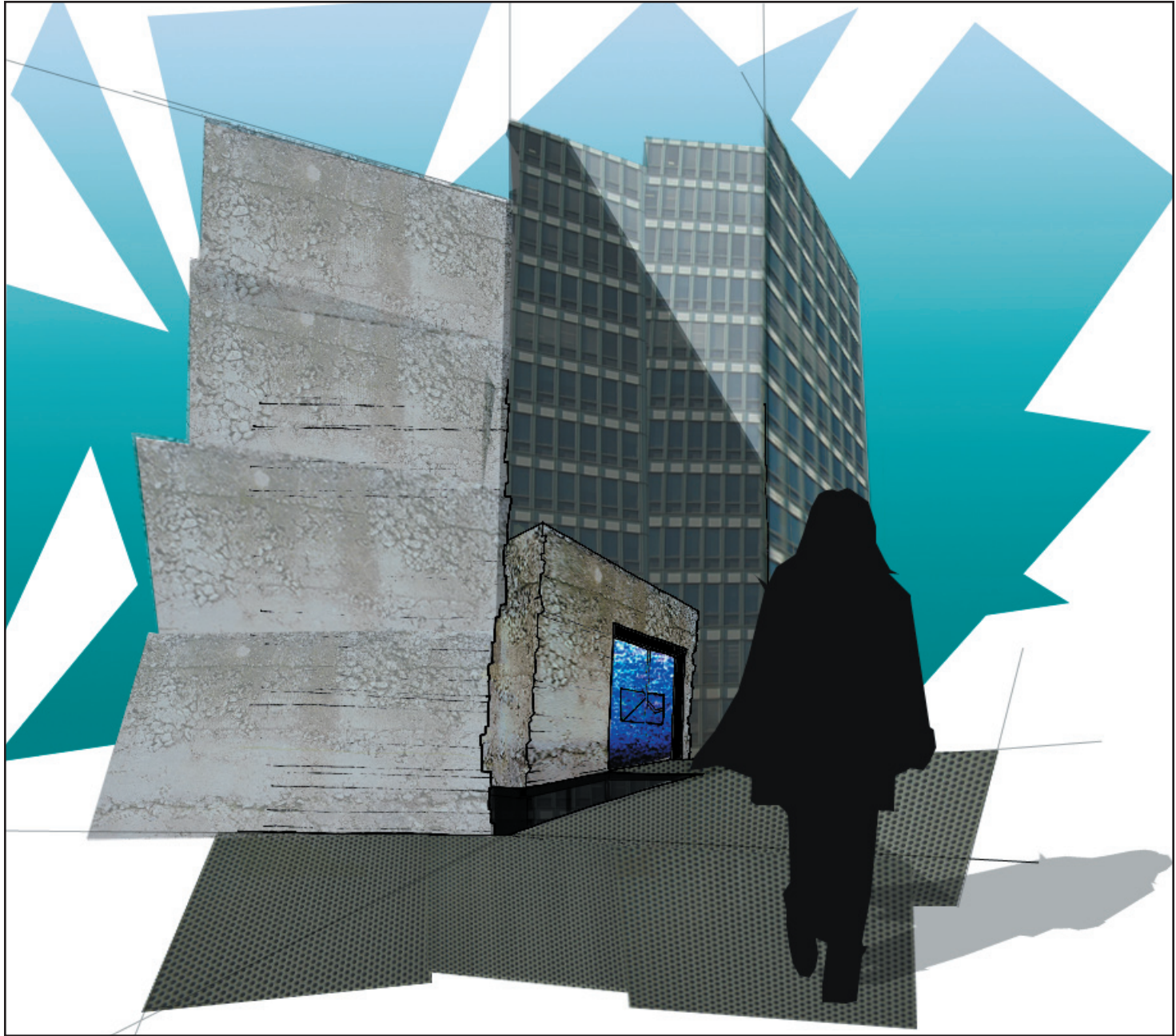
2 - Entering the path over the site is entered from the sidewalk on the west edge of the site. The choice to step onto the black grate is made difficult by the fact that there is no discernible end to the path from this vantage point.

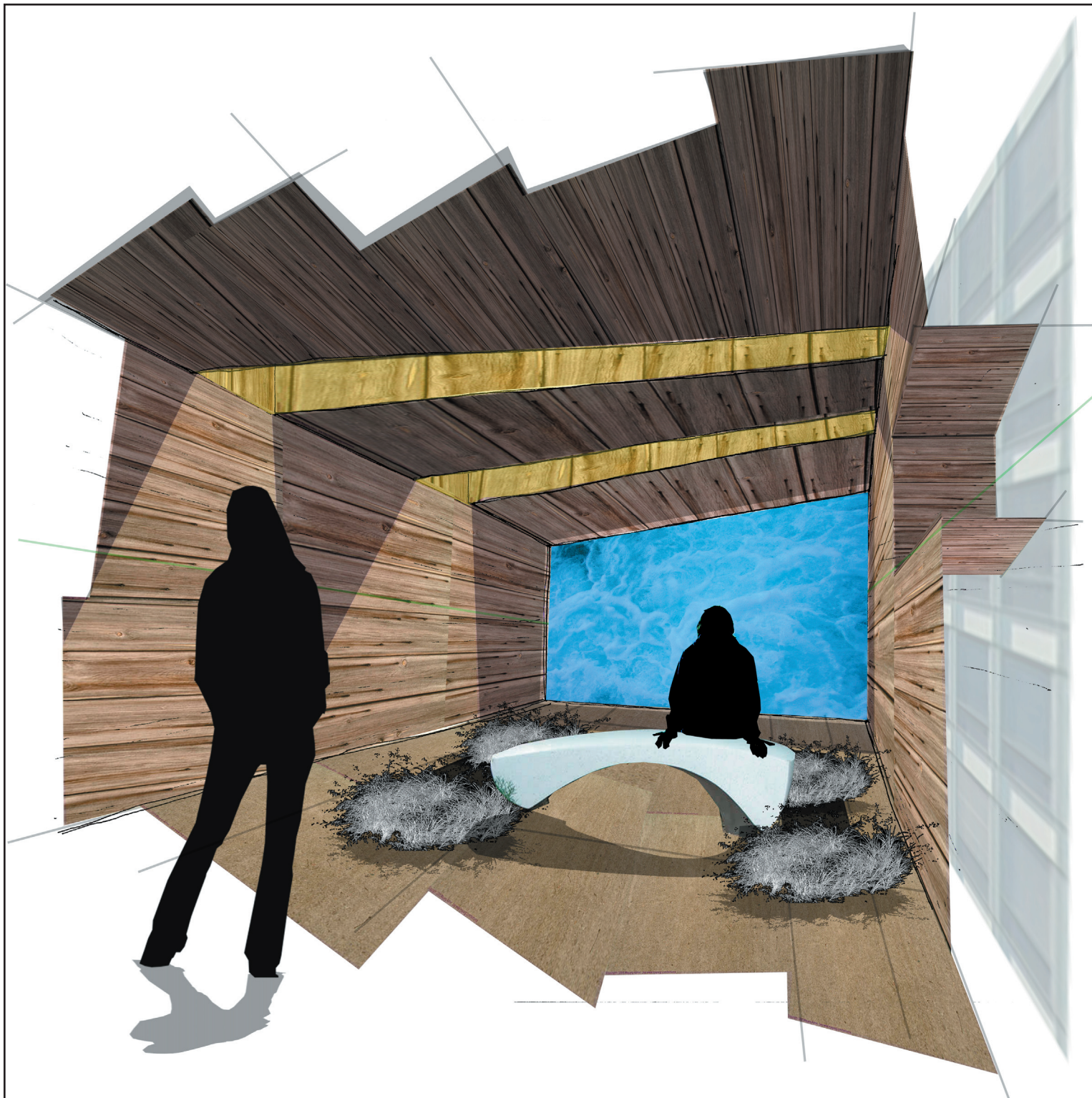




4 - As the path reaches the edge of an urban cliff, a cavern of life opens beneath you. Filled with shops colors, movement and people, this point in the journey exaggerates the distance between everyday living and a solitary journey.

5 - The pod sanctuary finally reveals itself as a destination as you round the hostel. Ahead of you the blue doors beckon, daring you to explore behind doors number 1 and 2.





6 - Inside the pod sanctuary light filters softly in as you peer into a wall of water. You are now completely surrounded by abstractions of nature, the not-so real interpretations we are forced to force upon ourselves. Everything from the carefully shaped stone bench to the wood cladding on the walls cements the impression of life simplified.

path 3 – under

I don't understand this calm
this glassy demeanor
I don't understand your need
to hold onto yourself
I don't understand this haughty
disconnectedness and its point

I want to see rage
I want to see tears
demand attention
think really really bad thoughts
and plot late night egg beatings

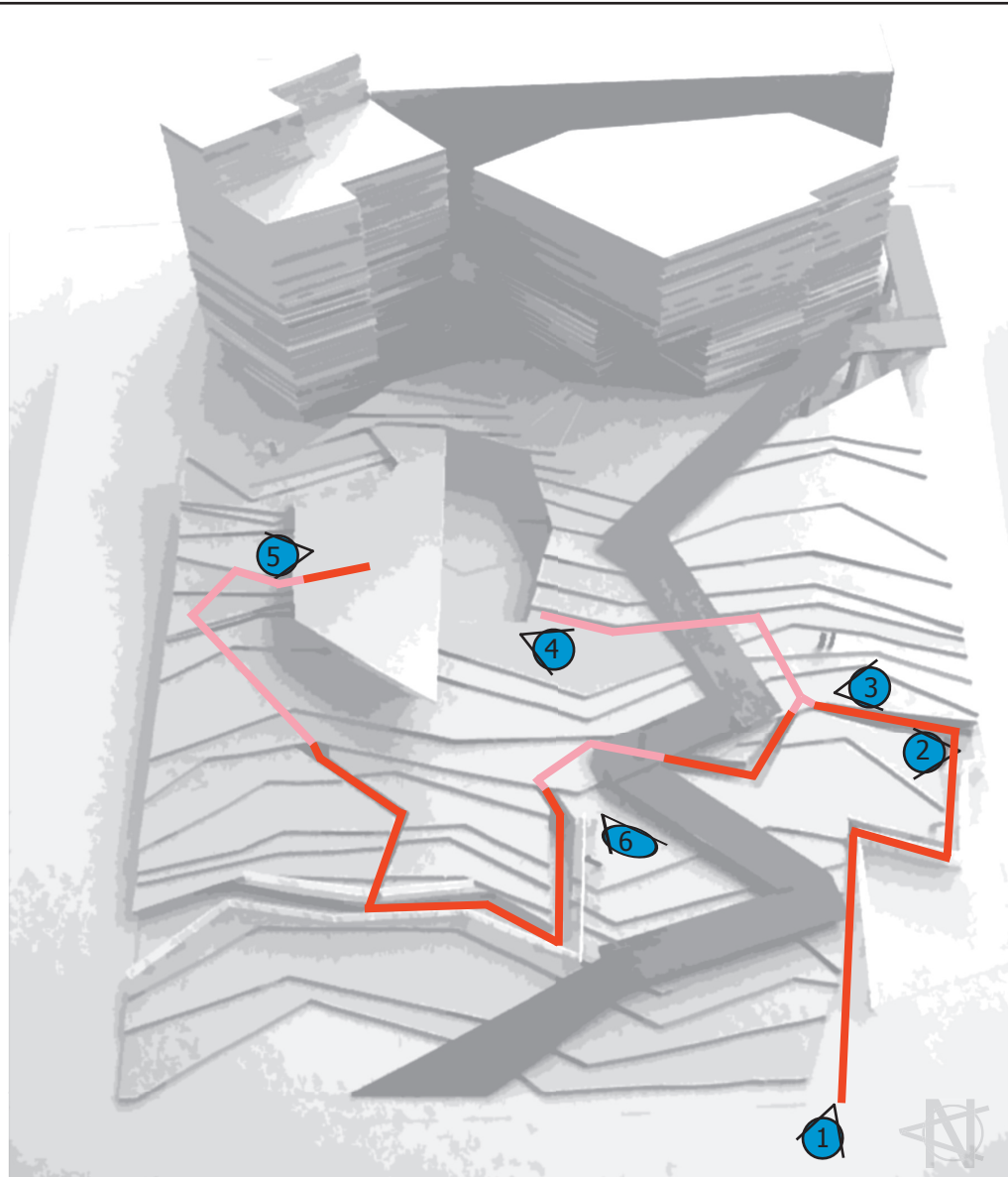
I don't understand the quiet
accepting of butthole and snot
I don't understand not wanting
to get even a little even
not willing to want the bad deeds
that bring a sublime joy and jail time

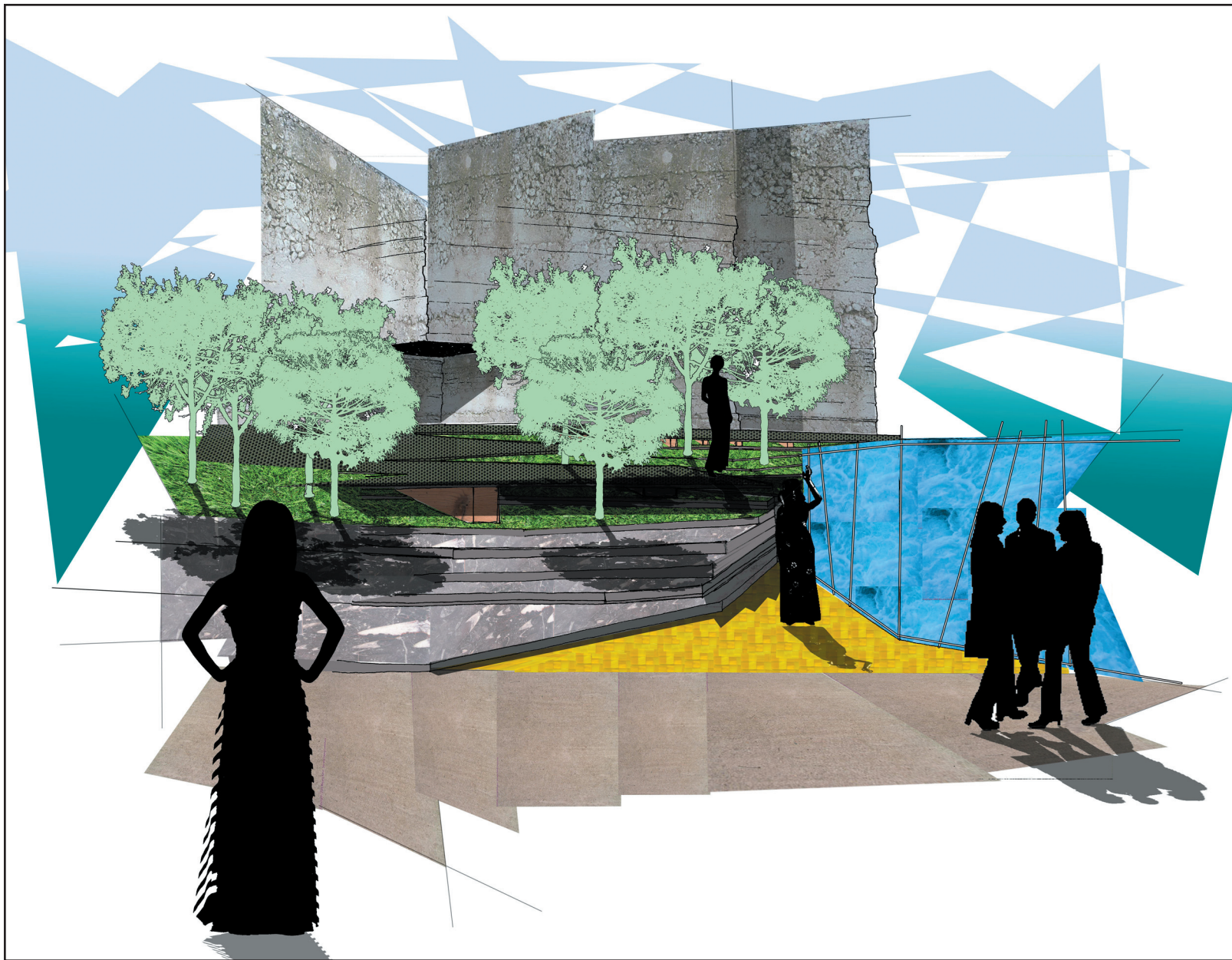
how do you do it
how do you hold in the monster
roiling in the bottom of your stomach
do you feed him younglings and hope
or does he not exist in your world

do you never feel him crawling up your spine
tingling at the base of your neck
pressing down on your back
as he stands arms high, chest out, breath blowing
and bellows discontented rage
at the world?

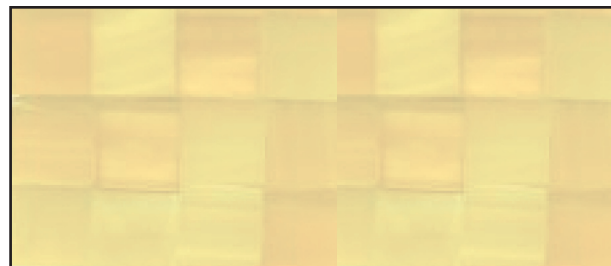
do you never feel him settling back
spent and smug into your gut
and waiting for the next moment
of honest, pure fury to boil into being
and pour out fuming waves
of blood colored frenzy.

I will never understand
calm, need, haughty, quiet, wanting,
not when the monster in the pit
the monster my family spawned
is rattling his coop in pride
at the wrath I brew.





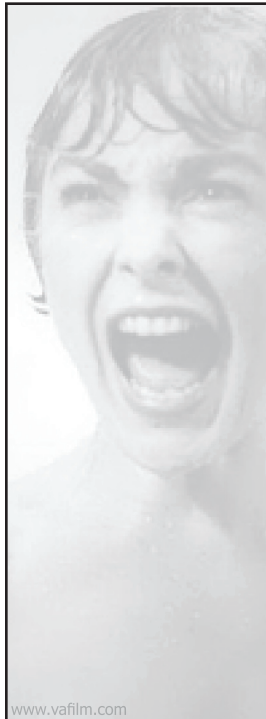
1 - We begin again at the sidewalk, this time at the beginning of the yellow "tile" road. Even from here you can see the path cutting into the ground, signaling its intentions right away.



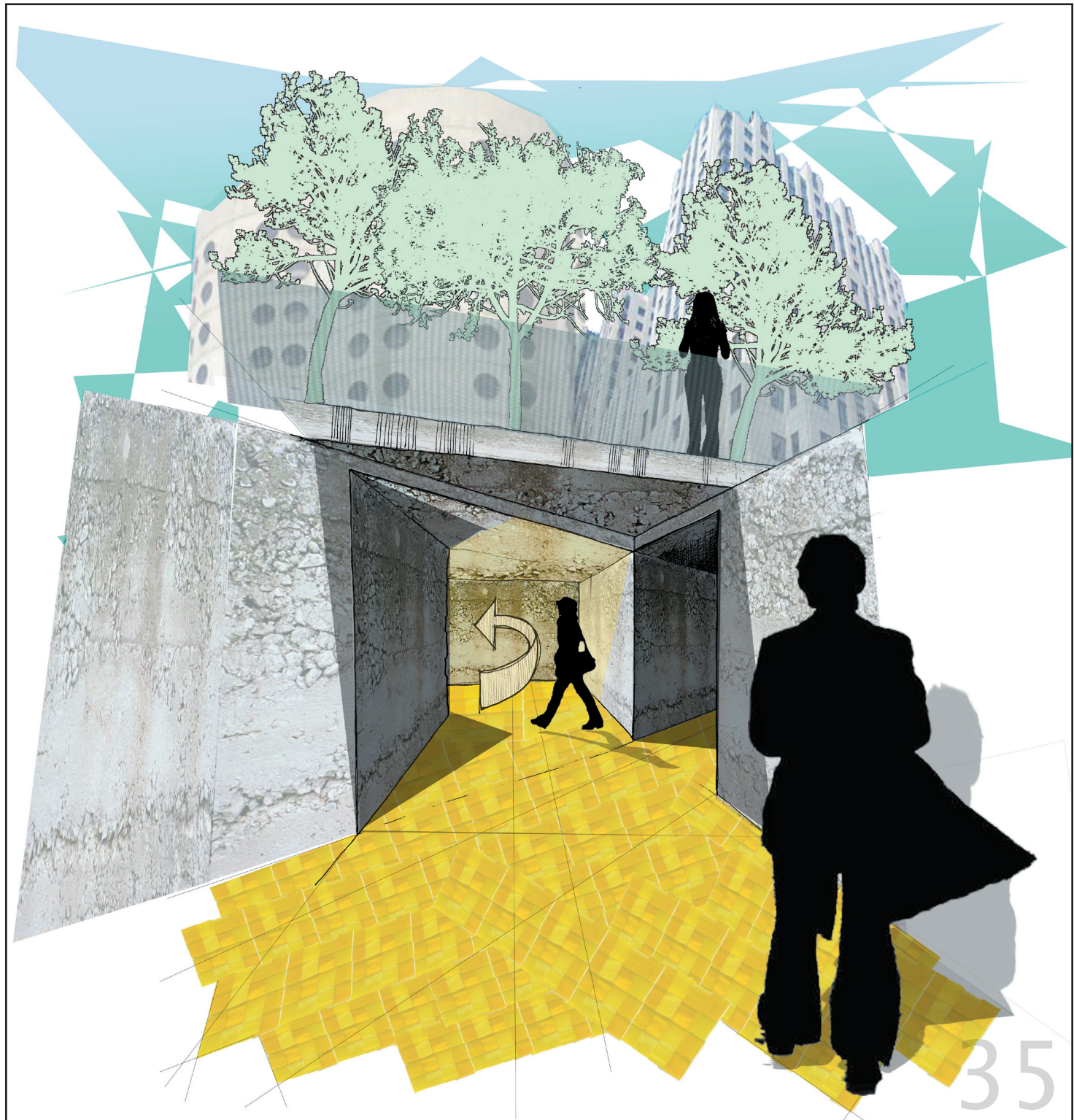


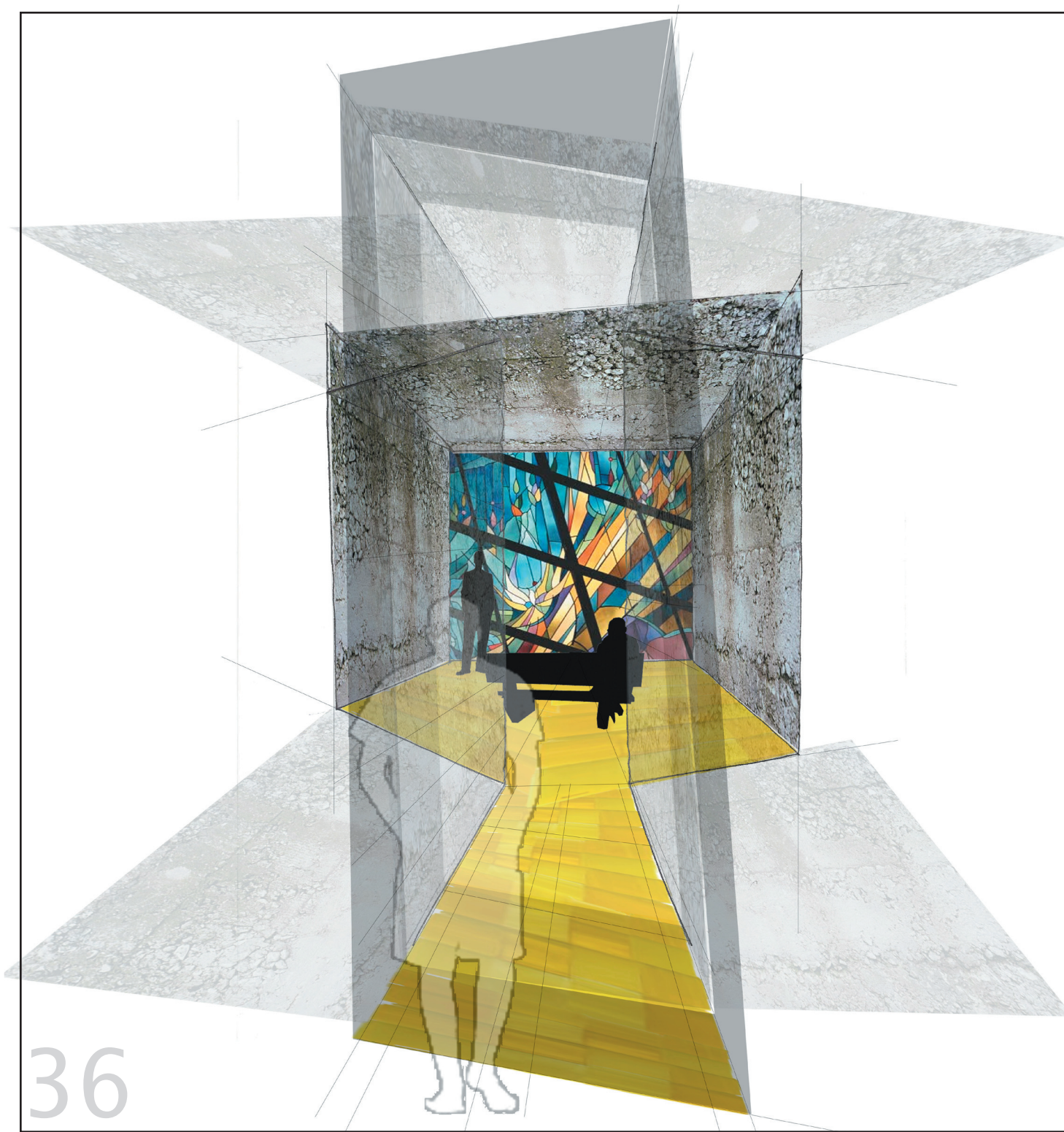
2 - As you walk beside the blue glass wall you suddenly come to a point where the path widens and dead ends. Here a ten foot tall sheet of clear translucent glass springs up and allows the street to make a surprising, if somewhat hazy, appearance. The interruption of the outside brings into sharper focus the lack of city in the middle of the city. This spot also gives you a feeling of open spaciousness that will soon be replaced with the uncertainty of tighter unknown routes

3 - Points along the road require you to make quick decisions. Do you pick the well-lit path to the left, or the dark and sinister offshoot to the right? Do you go with the safe or venture into the unknown?

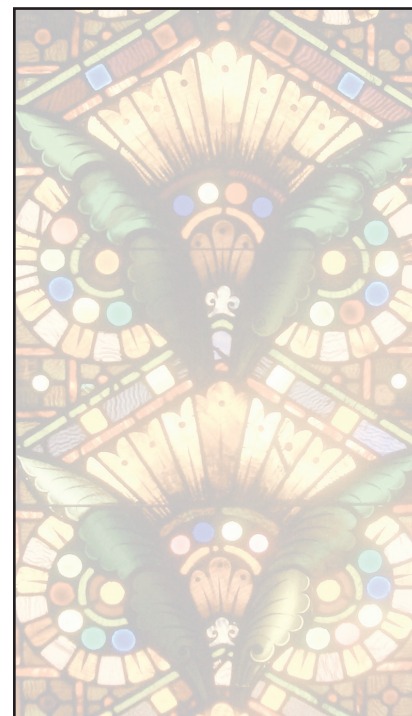


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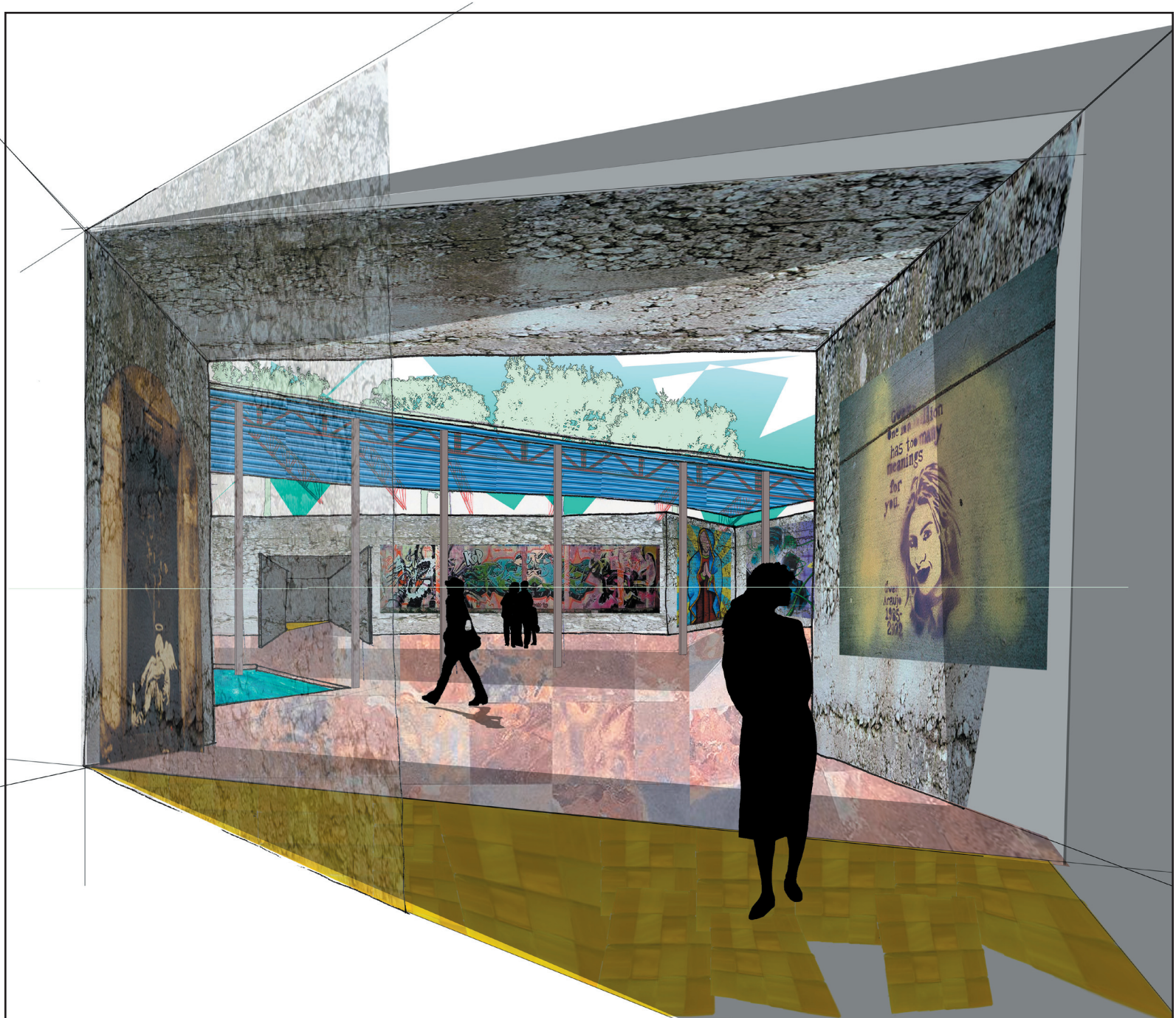


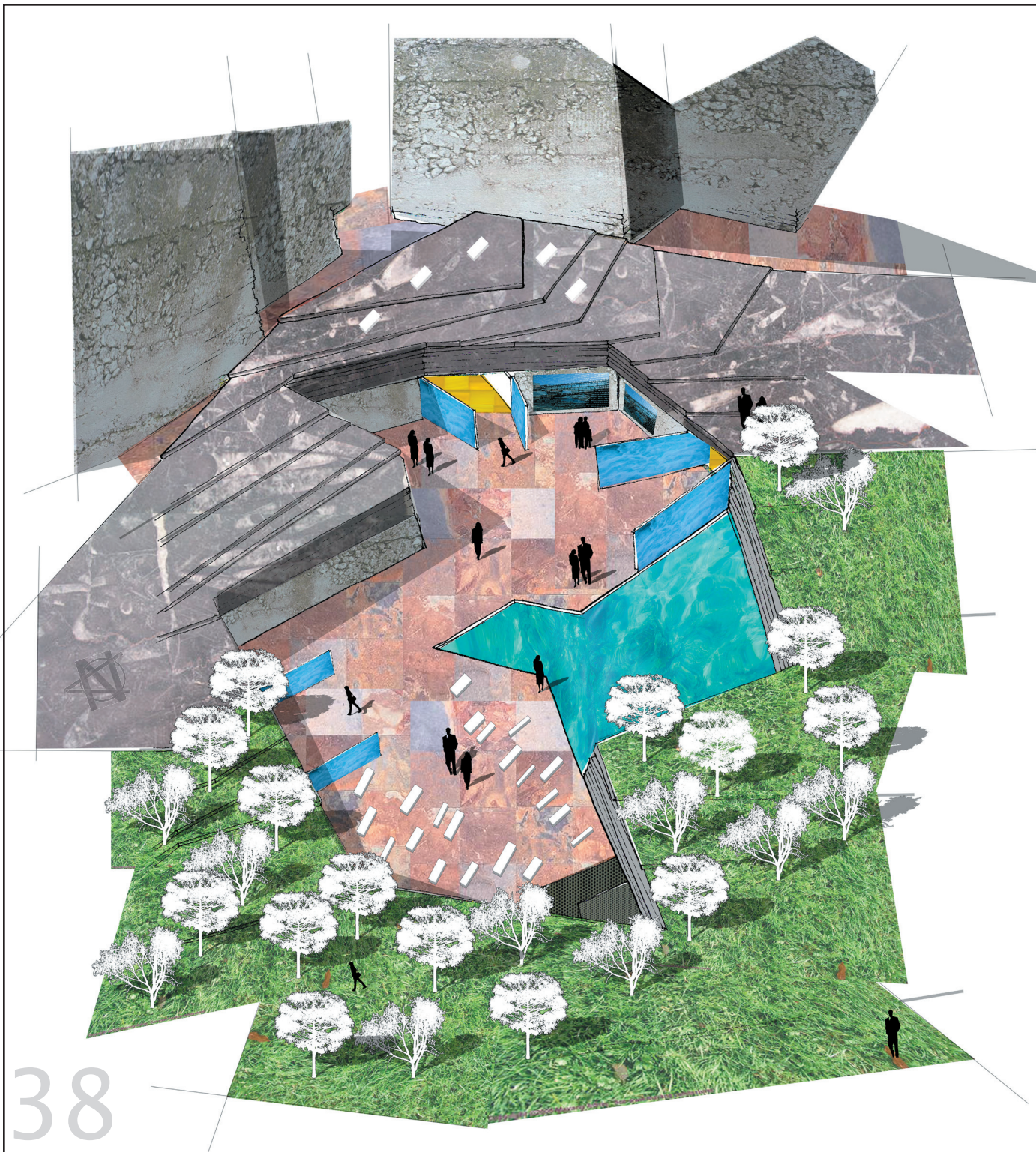


4 - If you chose the well-lit path you would end up on a darker path after a moment of light. Eventually the narrow path would open up into a small staging area. Light floods in through a stained glass window from an unknown source. Through the surface you can just make out shadows moving and hear the voices of others. A slightly uncomfortable feeling sits in the pit of your stomach when you realize you have to leave the light and head back into the dark in order to find your way to the light.

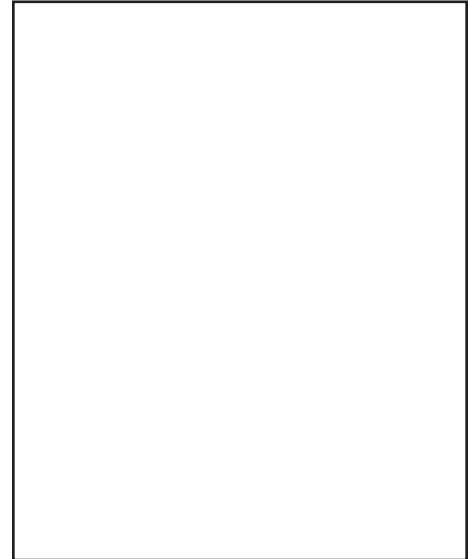


5 - After feeling your way around in the semi-dark, you finally come into the large, open sanctuary in the center of the memorial garden. The walls have been painted with images of and messages to loved ones. In front of you a light-blue roof sits gently covers half of the sanctuary, creating a gathering space beneath, while off to the left a large reflecting pool plays havoc with the movement of the sky, the trees, and the people moving along its edge.





6 - An aerial view of the sanctuary shows connections to both the paths and to the larger commercial cavern to the east. Again, the wanderer is called on to make a decision: out to the shops or back into the tunnels.



Even as I presented my final project, there were questions about the amount of life in my images. People still seemed to say, "shouldn't death be all dreary and monotone." If you see death as only a time for mourning, than yes it should. However, I'm not here to say death is good or bad, and end or a beginning. I'm not here to tell you how you should react or what ritual you should follow. I simply wanted to create an anomaly in your everyday life. A place for you to put aside long held fears and simply experience your life right next to your death. I chose to introduce you to death to help you realize that end or beginning, reaching the culmination of your life is an undeniable reality. A reality that can help you to look unflinchingly into death's eyes and say "boo."

12. the end of the road





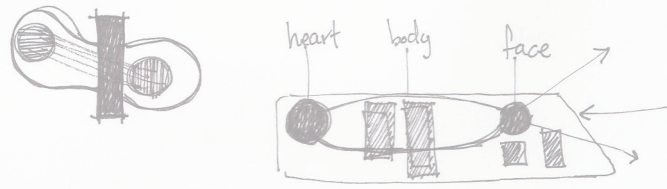
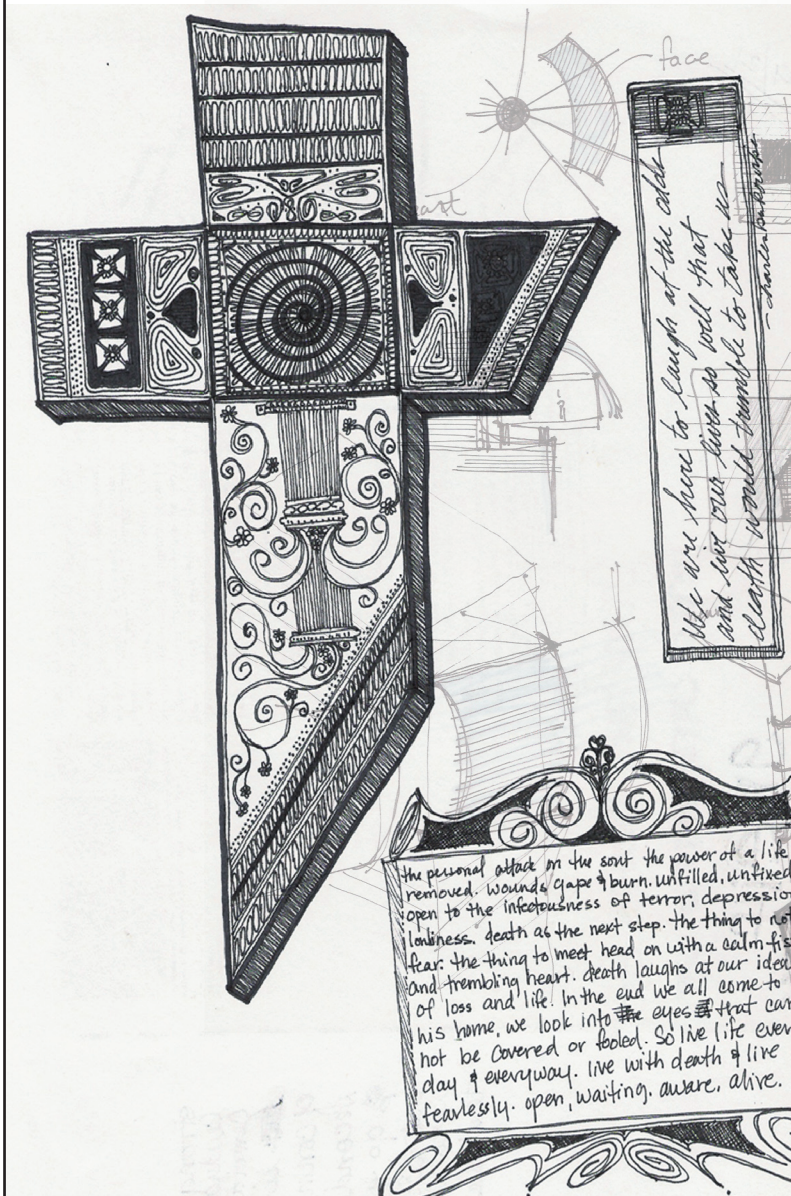
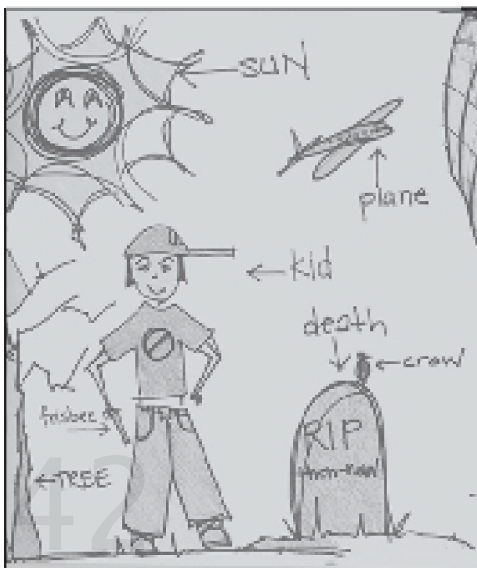
**NOT
FAIR**

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the rambling sketchbook



shit and sludge

today's thoughts
are shit and sludge
covered with pain and a
nagging feeling of incompetence

I should be writing
prose, a sonnet
to a site

I should be writing
connections of
death and longing
rationality and ideals

instead im writing
on shit and sludge
and the fact ive
worn a hole
in the side
of my tongue

i could write about
broken nightmares
and heavy silver
rings
of defeated love and
empty heart sockets

I could tell you
of her
with her gleam
and her glow
with her ever after
taxi sob story
and the thousand
and five times
I once more
didn't write

but it would just be
shit and sludge
cuz that's the kind of day today is
shit and sludge
and pain and a
nagging feeling of incompetence.

the personal attack on the sort the power of a life
removed. wounds gnaw & burn. unfilled, unfixed
open to the infatuation of terror, depression,
loneliness. death as the next step. the thing to not
fear: the thing to meet head on with a calm fist
and trembling heart. death laughs at our ideas
of loss and life. In the end we all come to
his home, we look into the eyes that can
not be covered or fooled. So live life every
day & every way. live with death & live
fearlessly. open, waiting, aware, alive.

life of monster

I don't know about you
but im terrified
I see it lurking
with its big rotten teeth
and drool covered jaws
it wants my soul
wants to rip apart
piece by blood clogged
piece and watch it
splash red and chunky
on the walls of wasted greatness

It lurks behind hallway doors
and floats in the dark
unlit corners of everyroom
it tap tap taps at the back of my
neck
begging me to turn my head just
right
/show me the jugular/
it begs in the sweat ridden voice
blasting sickly sweet over
my anxiety pinked cheek

you say its not there
its imagination overworked
but im in the room when the
lights switch off
I hear the disconnected giggle of
the lava beast as it slides along
the walls
I feel my skin crawl
at the butterfly brush across my
back

I know its there
waiting between pulse beats and
blinks
gnashing jaws and twisting
fingers
squinty eyes and curling laugh
waiting for my head on the silver
plated platter of another washed
out life.



it's a cast of misfits and idiots. who
make
up your crowd. come to quietly, re-
spectfully remember a man. who never
knew those words. they say peace,
a better place, a better life. i just
wonder if there's beer. and then i won-
der why we don't. remember why remem-
bering you means: sitting inside, cry-
ing softly,
speaking two octaves lower. you liked
to yell. to smoke pot. to push my but-
tons. watch loud-ass action movies. and
bark at the dogs...i dont ever remember
you.

being this still. being this quiet. and
i wonder why i should be. i wonder what
gramps would think. if he knew your
brothers and sisters. honored you with
an unofficial. bong passing moment in
our backyard. i wonder what aunt kay
would say. if i walked up to the psycho
passing. as your girlfriend, lost in her
"grief". and ripped out her soul. i
wonder at the God Squad trying to con-
vert me. on this of all days. sorry dai-
sy. me and the big man. got some shit to
straighten out. i wonder if Chad's not
here because he's high. or he's in jail.
i wonder if jill feels at all sorry. for
the teeth she knocked out. and the or-
naments she snagged. i also wonder
if she'll give them back now. i wonder
how many cookies exactly. it took to
get Brian to shut up. and how much more
caffeine he'll
consume. before the ceremonial banter
ends. i also wonder if he really ex-
pects a call. but mostly i wonder.
what would happen if i did just what you
asked. how would they react. if i just
shut the lid. wheeled you home. and
buried you in
the backyard.

April 12, as it is

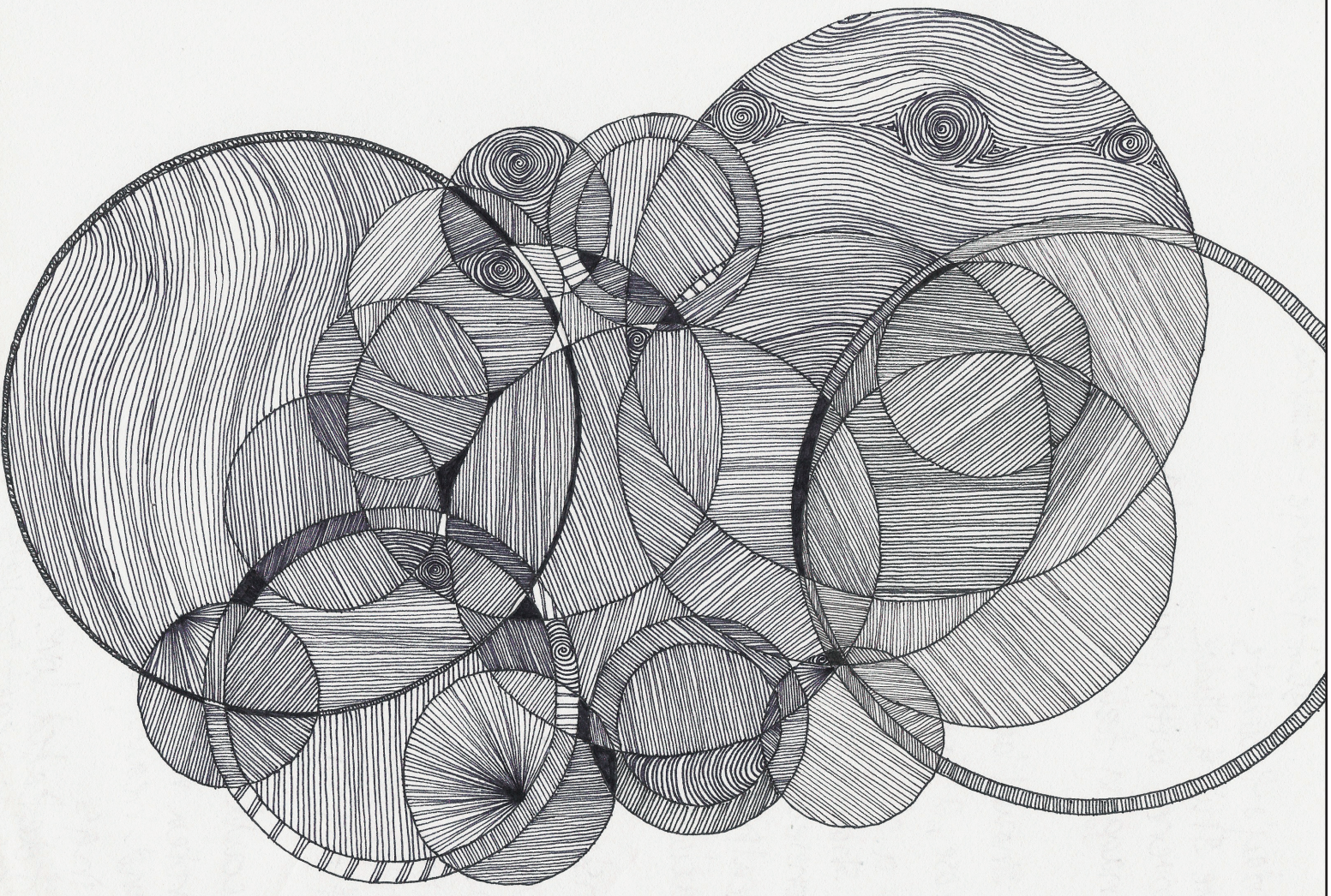
am I a hypocrite
what is a hypocrite
why shouldn't I be one
what if I just don't like the word
what can you do if I strike it
from my tongue
what can you do if I wipe it
from my brainpan
gone gone gone gone gone
file not found
please come back later
with your hypocrite
bullshit

furthermore
whats with this need
you have to label ourselves
so what if youre a this or a that
being "purple" now doesn't make you
"purple" in thirty years
or really even thirty seconds
maybe you should wipe
the labels from your tongue
and squeeze
them from your brainpan
seems like a good idea to me

oh and, why do I worry
about you and your nose
do you really matter
in my world
in my understanding
I don't think you do
So fuck you...
And your nose
I don't like either of you
I think you kinda suck
When you pretend to care

Oh and you over there
With your perfectly raped teeth
I don't like you either
Well, I love you
But I don't like you
You think to much
And think I should think to much
Like your testy mind
And I don't really like your testy mind
It asks to much and yet
Eaves so much to wonder
And speculate about
My answers burn and yours
Sleep deep under calming earth
Lets get out that mirror
And pull back those teeth
And see what he light fingers on

I haven't forgotten you
Empty shelled Barbie doll
With your stretchy smile and
911 boyfriend at my back
Release the rubber claws from
My calves an put a plug in you
Leaky little mammal
And shut the fuck up already
Pull back your eye curtains
And see, see, see, see, s. e. e.
You eagle eyed dorkus asshole. The end.

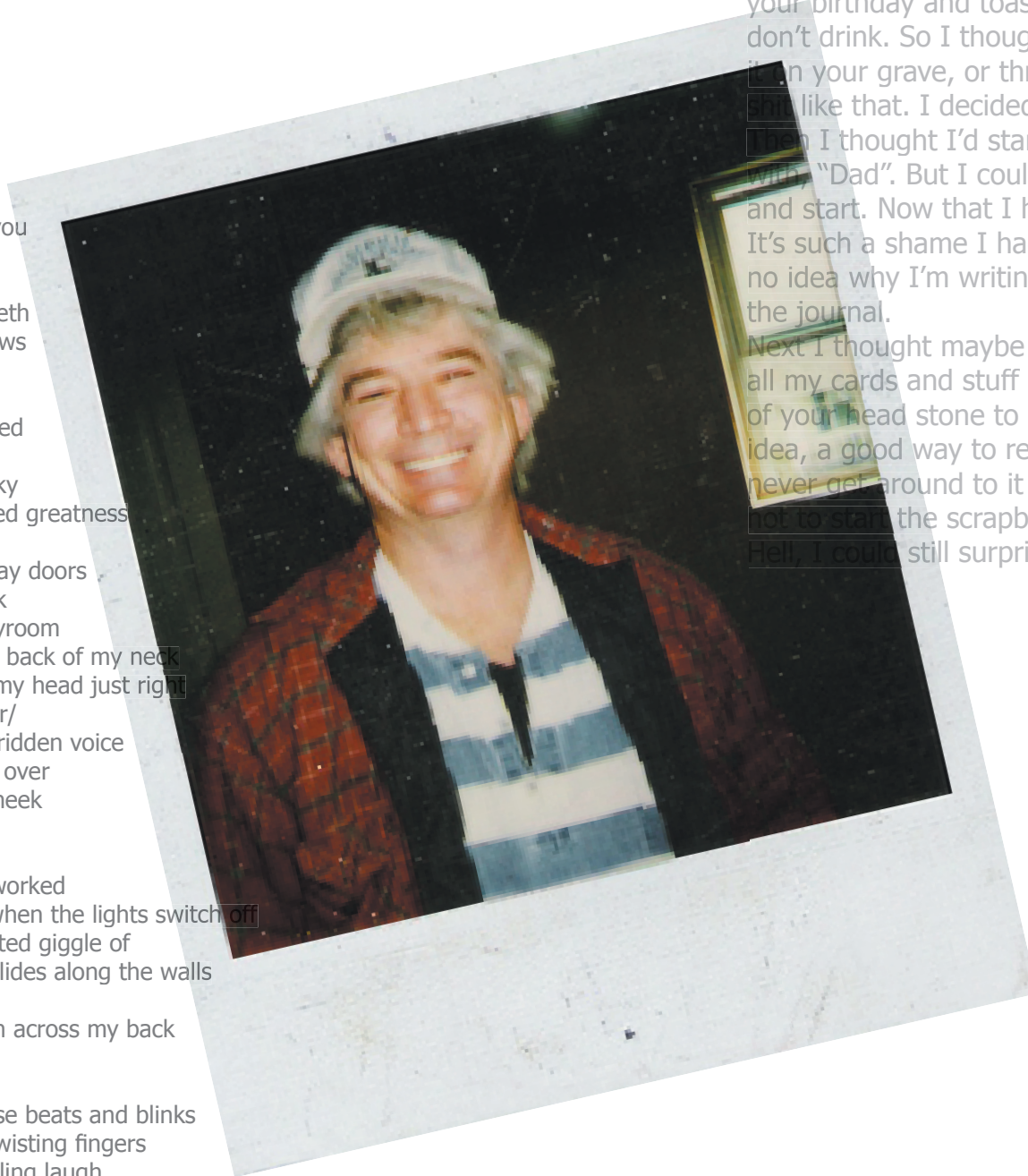


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waiting between pulse beats and blinks
gnashing jaws and twisting fingers
squinty eyes and curling laugh
waiting for my head on the silver
plated platter of another washed out life.



I thought I'd start a ritual, something I could repeat every year to honor you. I thought I'd buy a beer on your birthday and toast you, then, I remembered I don't drink. So I thought I'd take the beer and pour it on your grave, or throw it in the air, some stupid shit like that. I decided not to get a beer.

Then I thought I'd start a journal. Start each entry with "Dad". But I could never find time to sit down and start. Now that I have the time, I don't want to. It's such a shame I had the perfect first line. "I have no idea why I'm writing this." I decided not to start the journal.

Next I thought maybe I'd get a scrapbook and put all my cards and stuff in it. Maybe snap a few shots of your head stone to add to it. It seems like a good idea, a good way to remember you. I'll probably never get around to it though. I'll probably decide not to start the scrapbook.

Hell, I could still surprise myself.